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Near East & South Asia

14 JULY 1987

NEAR EAST & SOUTH ASIA

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KURDISH GUERRILLAS, ACTIVITIES, TRIALS DESCRIBED

Hamburg DIE ZEIT in German 22 May 87 pp 13-17

[Report by Alexander Foggensteiner and Hannes Reichmann: "Kurdistan: A Forgotten War"; first paragraph is DIE ZEIT introduction]

[Text] As the latest Western journalists two young Austrians managed last fall to get to the Kurdish rebel region at the Iranian-Iraqi border. There the Kurds fight for their freedom--against Khomeyni, for a state of their own.

In the shade of poplar trees a very old man sits on a felled tree stump. At his feet two children play in the dirt. As we crawl out from the thicket he turns his head in fright. Worried he bends over the little ones. Not until Mohammad, the bearded partisan leader, emerges from his concealment does the old man regard the danger as averted. With effort he struggles to his feet, relieved shakes hands, and kisses each person four times on the cheeks.

Two more Kurdish rebels emerge from a camouflaged position. In a matter of seconds they inform our leader about the situation in the village. The village, Nemenje, lies deep in Kurdistan, more precisely in the eastern part of Kurdistan which belongs to Iran. Nemenje is surrounded by three military posts of pro-Khomeyni Revolutionary Guards. During daytime the henchmen of the aged Ayatollah are in charge here; now, with the onset of dusk they entrench themselves in their positions and leave the field to the rebels.

Mohammad, at age 21 already a commander of over three dozen guerrillas, signals us to follow him. The village looks deserted. The branches of the poplar trees sway in the evening breeze. A few straying dogs, nobody else can be seen. The picture changes abruptly when we reach the first stone huts. Crowds of children emerge from the primitive dwellings, bearded men fill the dusty village square; the partisans now appearing from narrow side alleys are received with handshake and the Kurdish kissing ritual. On the crumbling walls of the houses, colorful Kurdish characters: loud protest against the rule of the fundamentalist

Persians. In front of that, a herd of water buffalo which trot from the fields to the drinking trough. Their drover sprinkles them with water.

The idyll developing in the soft sunset ends abruptly. Two heavily armed Kurds arrive on the double from their reconnaissance march. Their few sentences breathlessly gasped harden the faces of our escorts. Moments later the decision is made: To flee. The enemy, 70 strong, heard of our visit to the Kurdish village, our interpreter Ghassem translates on the run. Seventy "djash" armed with submachine guns, he said, are after us--Kurdish mercenaries, contemptuously called "sons of monkeys" by the rebels, who enter service against their own people for about U.S. \$200 a month.

We hurry from the bottom of the valley towards the saving mountains. Mohammad has his men fan out. Ibrahim, our man with the radio, mustered his smattering of English to explain to the two of us what had happened: A spy had betrayed us to Khomeyni's Revolutionary Guards; there are spies in Kurdistan in any number. We wade through the bed of a stream uphill, now take a secret path other than the one used in marching toward Nemenje.

Mohammad says goodbye, assigns two of his fighters to us. We pant uphill along a narrow steep mountain trail. We feel the four hours of marching in the swelteringly hot afternoon. In the now completely dark night we stumble exhausted over a plateau. At long last we meet again our escort Abdullah and the donkey with our equipment. Abdullah gesticulates wildly and excitedly downward in direction of the village. On the horizon the light of the Kurdish town of Piranshar can be made out, a place where Iranians and Iraqis have been slaughtering one another for over 7 years. It was not until hours later that Ghassem revealed to us with a grin the extent of the threat: the mercenaries had pursued us over the foothills up to the plateau.

In the pitch-dark night we tortured ourselves along step by step. The only orientation are the stumbling noises of the feet of the man in front. In narrow winding roads we go downhill over scree; we slip, fall, curse. In spite of the increasing chilliness, sweat breaks out of the pores at an elevation of 2,000 meters. Six hours of everyday Peshmerga life. Then at long last a campfire, the outlines of the wool tent of shepherds.

Kurdistan. A homeland. No state. The vague description of the decade-long suffering of a people. The borders politically and geographically disputed, the land a stringing together of inhospitably mountainous rock masses. Meter-high snow in the winter. The summer scorching. A spot of earth at the intersection of five states. Better than 20 million Kurds live in an area twice the size of the Federal Republic of Germany; it extends from the Turkish Mount Ararat in the north to the Plains of

Mesopotamia in the south and from the Taurus chains in the west to the Iranian plateau in the east (see map below).

But "the borders are not defined," it is stated dryly in "Meyers Lexikon." Ten million Kurds live--discriminated against and persecuted as "Mountain Turks"--in Turkey's east. The roughly 800,000 Kurds in Syria as cultural minority are facing doom. The mountain tribes in Iran and Iraq, even now to some extent feudally structured, on the other hand for decades have tenaciously resisted the central governments in Teheran and Baghdad. They are exposed to brutal massacres; many expect they will be forced to leave Kurdistan on account of mass deportations and forcible resettlements.

But who talks about the Kurds? It is obviously their fate to be regarded as outlaws under international law; deprived of the most primitive political and cultural rights--a people on the narrow line between illegitimate outlaw status and a tenacious fight for national self-determination. A state of their own is stubbornly denied them by Turks, Persians, and Iraqis. The borders which are still valid were drawn by the victorious powers after World War I; the previously promised autonomy remained nothing but empty talk. The mostly poorly organized rebellions in subsequent decades achieved nothing for the deceived, forgotten Kurds under their legendary leader Mullah Mustafa Barzani.

The sole ray of light in the bloody history of the 20-million people lasted exactly 327 days. The later president Quazi Mohammad proclaimed the Kurdish "Republic of Mahabad" on Persian soil in 1946. Quazi and most of his cabinet members ended upon the gallows; the Soviet occupiers watched the Persian army as it destroyed the Kurdish state without doing anything. But the rebel minority has not laid down its arms to this day.

After the start of the Gulf war the Kurds were indeed rid of the hated Shah; but his successor, Ayatollah Khomeyni, proved to be no less bloodthirsty. And what is even worse: the Kurds face the threat of being wiped out between the fronts. In the war which has lasted for almost 7 years, 300,000 to 500,000 Kurds have been killed on the northern front alone. But nobody worries about that.

The Kurdish elite fled into the mountains and established innumerable parties and groups in their countries, some of which are fighting among themselves, in times of crises they even fight against one another. there are eight Kurdish parties each in Turkey, Syria, and Iraq and three in Iran; almost all of them can operate only from the underground, their followers are persecuted and tortured.



Key:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. 50-100 percent Kurds | 5. Jordan |
| 2. Turkey | 6. Iraq |
| 3. Syria | 7. Soviet Union |
| 4. Lebanon | |

The roughly 20 million Kurds are the biggest people in the world without a state of their own. Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, the territory occupied by the Kurds was annexed by five different states: Turkey, Persia, Iraq, Syria, and the Soviet Union.

Land (1)		Fläche (2)	Bevölkerung (3)	Prozent der Gesamtbev (4)
Turkei	(5)	230 000 km ²	10 Mill.	23,8 %
Iran		125 000 km ²	ca. 5 Mill.	16 %
Irak	(6)	74 000 km ²	ca. 3 Mill.	28 %
Syrien	(7)	20 000 km ²	ca. 800 000	11 %
Sowjetunion	(8)	10 000 km ²	ca. 300 000	0,1 %

Key:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Country | 5. Turkey |
| 2. Area | 6. Iraq |
| 3. Population | 7. Syria |
| 4. % of total | 8. Soviet Union |

Additional 500,000 Kurds live in the diaspora, especially in the Near East countries and in Western Europe.

Our goal was to visit the Kurds in Iran. We made our first contacts through a Kurdish liaison man in Vienna. The biggest and most important group of Kurdistan, the "Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran" (KDP), after prolonged hesitation was willing to lead us into the "liberated area" along the Iranian-Iraqi border. The U.S. Department of State rates the 12,000 rebels of the KDP as the strongest guerrilla force in the world aside from the Eritrean EPLF rebels.

Our path into Iran leads through the Iraqi capital of Baghdad. Landing under protection of night. Like almost everything else in Iraq, the ultramodern airport is named after the ubiquitous President Saddam Huseyn. We are going to spend the 10 days in Kurdistan without passport; it was confiscated by broadly grinning secret policemen. The following day they took us in a Japanese jeep from the 3-million hothouse on the Tigris River in direction north: to Kurdistan, at the border of the state within the state.

In the Northern Iraqi oil city of Kirkuk, where the historical settlement area of the Kurds starts, the actual hosts--partisans of the Iranian

KDP--receive us. While the sandy desert gradually changes into the parched, breathtaking, wildly romantic Kurdish mountain world, the military presence of the Iraqis at this "border" is disquieting. Not a single crag, however small it may be, without a machine gun nest; huge emplacements, camouflaged by earthworks, behind them tanks of Soviet-type construction and artillery pieces.

One figure speaks volumes: half of the 700,000 Iraqi soldiers (this army is the best equipped and trained in the region) protect not only the several hundred kilometer long border against the Iranian mortal enemy but at the same time also the sore flank in its own state. A flank that can never be precisely defined. For it is unpredictable where and how the Kurdish rebels of Iraqi citizenship will attack the government troops of their state or will ambush them.

Northern Iraq is conspicuously Kurdish. The Arab caftan has been replaced by the wide breeches, the "pantols"; in addition the Kurds wear a shirt, over it the "kowa," a tight-fitting jacket, and around the hips the "pstend," a 5-meter-long beltlike wrap-around cloth. The head is protected against the searing heat by the "klau," around which the "arban," a black and white patterned scarf, is wrapped like a turban.

North of the biggest Kurdish city of Sulaymaniyah with half a million inhabitants the armed presence of the Iraqis decreases. Here the Iraqi "djash" are in charge: Kurds in the pay of Saddam Huseyn, the masters of the buffer zone between the regular Iraqi troops and the Iraqi resistance. We no longer travel along the bumpy asphalt roads but along gravel roads blasted from the mountain slopes, cross raging mountain streams. In the soft up and down of the hills before the big mountain mass a few small rye fields are the only signs of human life; it is difficult to believe that war prevails here.

At a fork in the road, there are bearded young men, the Kalashnikov over the shoulder, the ammunition belt bulging, hand grenades on the belt--"Peshmerga" (literally: "Those who face death"), Kurdish freedom fighters, partisans who for several generations have defied the superior armies on both sides of the border.

The control points are now Kurdish, as everything else here. Caution is nonetheless great. "Here is the end point for all kinds of riff-raff," Ahmad, the driver of our jeep says. He means spies. For here, in this region believed uninhabitable, where the Iraqis after deportations and massacres of Iraqi Kurds even sealed the wells with concrete, the elite of the Kurdish resistance entrenches itself: The fighters against Khomeyni's fundamentalist regime as well as those against Saddam Huseyn's spy state.

We pass a barrier. Then the rebel hospital built in a depression. A narrow gorge which, after a narrow point only a few meters wide, broadens into the basin: We are in the "daftar," the political camp of the KDP. All-around Russian Dushka air defense guns camouflaged by weather-worn sandbags protect from the enemy. At the bottom of the valley, loam-covered barracks; a dusty place on which the Kurdish boys run after a big ball. In the shade of a sheet metal hut covered with camouflage paint, Peshmergas try their skill playing Ping-Pong. Leisure time is embodied in the KDP party statute despite the endless campaigns against the Persians.

"We had to move our headquarters six times in the past six years," Kak Said says in nearly accent-free French; he ranks second in the party hierarchy. Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou, the top man of the KDP, is once again traveling in Europe to seek political support for the Kurds.

As most of the persons we talked with, Said, too, hides behind a pseudonym. It is supposed to protect his wife who works as operating-room nurse and probably also has to patch up hostile Khomeyni soldiers wounded by Kurds. "Kak" stands for friend or "comrade," a sign of respect. "Honor cannot be bought," a Kurdish saying goes, therefore it is richly accorded to someone who is entitled to it.

This evening the KDP leadership team has gathered around us for the sumptuous welcoming meal. "Arrak" tasting like aniseed, a clear schnapps, loosens the tongues. Kak Said, a former university professor of chemistry, becomes talkative: "It has been 7 years since I have last seen my wife." The features of the 50-year old harden. Separation for years from wife and child, family members and friends in Khomeyni's torture chambers or as refugees in exile, that is the everyday life of the Kurdish freedom fighters.

Long after the meal has been over, Ghassem, the interpreter, provides us with figures: In the past 7 years 4,000 Kurdish rebels were killed in action against Khomeyni. More than 50,000 civilians, children, women and very old men lost their lives in the Kurdish mountains since the mullahs assumed power.

Ali Nassiri, a kitchen helper in the rebel camp, tells us about the fate of his family. His older brothers, both of them family fathers, have been in prison for years because of illegal political activity for the Kurdish cause. He does not know whether they are still alive. Ali himself, at age 22, as leader of a rebel unit, was caught in an ambush. A grenade fragment tore off his left leg. Sixteen submachine gun bullets riddled his body. Miracle-like, Ali survived; after the amputation of his shot-up leg, only a stump the width of a hand remained of his thigh.

For months he waited for a prosthesis. Now he is able to take care of simple kitchen duties.

Ali's fighting spirit is undiminished in spite of his disability. When he speaks of the hostile Pasdarns, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, wild hatred flickers in his dark eyes: "Look what Khomeyni did to me and my family." He takes a black and white photograph from his breast pocket. "My niece. She is only 10. She must wear the Chador, even while playing. How serious she looks. Do children in Europe look that way, too?" Hala is the name of the pretty girl with the sad eyes. In school she only learns Farsi, the language of the Persians. She is forbidden to speak Kurdish as she does at home.

Ali stops talking--a cripple who now cooks the rice for his comrades in arms when they return hungry to camp. He still has his Kalashnikov. But he won't need it here. He, himself, will never again be able to participate in an attack. Between the meager meals Ali makes himself useful by repairing weapons.

Five days later. We reach the rebel camp in the Piranshar region, which is located at a height of nearly 2,000 meters. Now we are already a few kilometers deep in enemy country: illegally.

Once again we arrive under the protection of night. Abdullah, one of our escorts, releases the safety catch of his submachine gun as we approach a campfire in front of three tents. A voice comes loud and clear from the direction of the fire. Our leader answers and then shoulders his Kalashnikov: No danger; they are friendly shepherds.

These shepherds are seminomads. Every year they move up into the mountains with their sheep and goats, the few personal belongings loaded on a few mules. From the end of March to September they live here in this karstic alpine landscape for the sake of the cattle and the rebels. Since last year they are strictly prohibited by the Persian administrators of Kurdistan from going from the villages into the mountains. Even after arson attacks on the tents made of sheep and goat wool, they were not dissuaded from their long familiar custom.

Daybreak in the camp. For hours the women swing a goat skin, suspended from a tripod and filled to the brim back and forth; that is the way yoghurt is made. The shepherd, who spends the entire night with his flock high above in narrow gorges, now enjoys smoking a pipe. Breakfast is spread on the ground: cheese, yoghurt, flat round bread, and tea. Whatever these people have they are happy to share.

At noontime there is occasionally a piece of tough mutton boiled without spices over open fire in a soot-blackened pot, in addition sticky rice. There is a shortage in the cities of what is available here of edible foods. Looked at it from this angle they are rich, these seminomads, at any rate they have enough to make a tomorrow possible: excess food.

Only now do we become aware that the camp has more than only three tents. At nearly every one of the many small mountain streams there are a few of the peculiar looking dwellings. The roof woven from goat hair, supported by three wooden stakes, keeps out cold and heat. The single room is bedroom as well as kitchen; here food is stored and sheep are slaughtered.

Hardly anyone of these shepherds can read or write. But to the rebels these nomadic shepherds are vital for survival, for here high in the narrow basins there is no infrastructure: no roads, the climate is harsh, here nearly everything exists as it did 100 years ago. The only indication that this is life in the 20th century are the small transistor radios from which resound the broadcasts of the "Voice of Kurdistan" jammed by the state. The KDP pirate station transmits its program in Kurdish and Farsi deep into southern Iran from constantly changing radio stations.

Otherwise little can be seen of civilization in this secluded corner of the world. Physicians have not been seen here for years; the reason: no Kurd can afford the expensive examinations by the mostly Persian physicians. Things are going along poorly with respect to hygiene. The innumerable little rivers and streams of Iranian-Kurdistan are the breeding grounds for viral diseases. Nomads living higher up on the mountains perform all their bodily functions into the stream from which drinking water is taken down below, which, with sugar added as nutritious food, is supposed to nurse back to health physically hopelessly retarded babies. In Kurdistan, 150 out of 1,000 newborn babies die in their first year of life. Some are buried like dogs--one mouth less to feed.

The leadership of the partisan party is helpless against the inadequacy of medical care for the civilian population. Only a few meagerly equipped first-aid men, armed and with knapsacks filled to the brim, visit the mountains. But even the most essential items are in short supply. Colored pills and powders whose expiration dates are long past are popular with the shepherds against all aches and pains, but are hardly effective.

Nevertheless almost everything can be bought around there. Two dozen black markets line the Iranian-Iraqi border. Even at the foot of the

3,600-meter high Khandil, the highest mountain of the region, peddlers have set up their barracks and tents. Horses and mules are ready for tryout. It is 100 kilometers to the nearest road.

At this market the following are available: rice, pistachios, gym shoes of the Iranian trademark "Addidos," TV's, cassette recorders, international cigarettes, soap, rugs, cookies, flour, shirts, tea--and weapons which find their way here from Lebanon by dubious channels. Here alone there is a daily turnover of goods valued at \$100,000. But the Kurdish partisans sitting high above the market provide security and collect protection money with which they finance their struggle for independence.

The "schai," an aromatic tea, is brewed, the last price is negotiated. And the prices are steep, for the goods accumulated here are in short supply on both sides of the border and have been brought here over long distances from Baghdad and Teheran. The 4 by 6 meter coarsely woven rug at \$500 is comparatively speaking an occasion. All these goods are delivered by mule caravans in night marches over mountain trails causing dizziness: Thus neither the Iranian nor the Iraqi artillery can harm the dealers. Anyhow the war seems to be forgotten on the market. Especially since the Iranian black marketeers put on a good face for the expensive game. That is understandable, for sugar and oil, e.g., are rationed in Khomeyni land and can be obtained only by ration coupons.

During the return trip from the black market, too, we pass again numerous roadblocks of the Iraqi military. Military rescue vehicles, which transport wounded from the northern front of the Gulf War to hospitals, rush by us again and again. Iranian Kurds are also being taken care of in these hospitals.

Other wounded fighters drag themselves to one of the two rebel hospitals by mule or on foot. These modestly equipped hospitals are the pride of the Kurdish resistance. There are no Kurdish physicians. The few students who are sent to Europe do not return after completion of their studies. Even when the KDP expressed itself ready to pay a surgeon from its own ranks \$100,000 a year, it did not find any Kurdish interested parties for this attractive position.

Now two French relief organizations operate both field hospitals. There is enough work: daily consultations, a first aid course, a French course,--and time and again difficult operations. Organizationally much is in a bad way. One operating table is rotting away out in the open because important parts are still stuck at the Turkish-Iraqi border. Modern operating room electronics or a refrigerator for serums are not available here. Ice is still brought here from the ice plant 50

kilometers away. The diesel-powered electric generating unit most of the time does not function. There are many poisonous snakes in the area but even the hospital does not have any antidote. Inoculations are done with whatever is available--not rarely a self-concocted medicine cocktail.

Consulting hour in the rebel hospital; the waiting line is long. "They expect medicine. Red and green pills are most popular," Jean-Marc, the French lab assistant says. Partisans are given preference in treatment. Civilians rarely are here and must pay one Iranian dinar for the examination.

Early in the morning on the road northwest of Sulaymaniyah in direction of the border town of Halabjah. Long rows of Russian tanks of the Iraqi army pass us; towards the northern front of the Gulf War into the Kurdish mountains. The town of Halabjah behind heavily fortified earthworks; tank and artillery guns are aimed against the mountain chain in the east which we want to cross during one of the next few nights. Halabjah serves as supply base for the rebels in the mountains.

The crumbling asphalt road ends at the outskirts of the town. The hills all around have been devastated by Iranian barrage fire. Innumerable small bomb craters, every 5-10 meters a hole caused by the impact. A tiny guardhouse, two Iraqi persons in uniform with steel helmet: They issue laissez-passer; without them it is not possible to go anywhere here.

In a gorge there is the last frontier post of the Iraqis, almost a real border station. The soldier on duty writes our first names on a piece of paper. We hold the knapsack with the barely camouflaged photographic equipment close to us. He talks forever over the field telephone with a superior, then we are permitted to go ahead in direction of Iran. We go even deeper down into the narrow gorge. Then across a raging stream. Our mule refuses to move for minutes.

We come to a huge cemetery. Hundreds of hurriedly put-up boulders represent those Kurdish fighters who were killed here during bombing attacks by Iranian jets 10 years ago. At that time not a single one of the 800 village inhabitants survived the massacre in the village at the border. Since that time the Iraqi border soldiers entrench themselves in the ruins remaining here and there and keep a lookout on the cemetery surrounded by barbed wire entanglements.

To enter it, is dangerous. Left and right of a two meter wide passage, innumerable contact landmines which are connected by tripwires are buried. A few days before we passed through here, one of the refugee children searched for the runaway donkey of his family. The animal

trotted unhurt back to the hut of its owner, the seven-year-old boy was torn apart by a mine. The mangled body has decayed since then in the cemetery without being buried. Nobody dares to go there.

Kurdistan's young people know nothing but war. Thousands have lived for years on the run, in the mountains. Their faces are sometimes pictured on posters for charitable purposes because a look at them allegedly softens the heart more quickly. Since the beginning of the Gulf War, which has lasted for 7 years in the meantime, the senseless murdering has caused hundreds of thousands of victims. The children whom we meet in the Hauraman refugee camp act bewildered when Iranian grenades whistle over the mountain crest. Mesmerized they stare at the rising column of smoke before they seek a hiding place in the foxholes.

The refugee dwellings are glued to the steep rocks, heated up by the scorching sun, like swallow's nests. But the majority of the Kurds who have fled from Iran lives under plastic sheets full of holes and rotted tarpaulins which are fastened to shade-providing branches. The standard fare is rice boiled with dirty water. All of them want to return to their houses and villages in Iran later on. Later? "God willing, when our revolution will be successfully concluded," hopes Mohammad, the chairman of the freely elected village council of Hauraman.

These few thousand Iranian Kurds who have eked out a life beneath human dignity in the border region for over 5 years, do not appear in any refugee statistics. "Nobody knows that we exist, that people live here at all," Kak Nabi complains. The 45-year-old former geography professor is head of the KDP committee in this region. He leads an average partisan's life. He has not seen his family, which lives in Iran, for 5 years. Even correspondence becomes difficult: If the state spies were to get wind of it, then the family members would be faced with persecution and torture.

What he has left is hope for victory--and the fight against the Revolutionary Guards on the other side of the mountains. Against enemies who, like the Kurdish Peshmerga, do not fear death.

Kak Nabi tells the following story: After a successful attack an Iranian soldier was taken prisoner. When the partisans asked him to come along, he replies: "You can't see me. Khomeyni said that we are invisible to you." When the Peshmergas threaten to execute him, he responds: "Khomeyni told us that your bullets have no effect on us." The Kurds fire a shot into the man's knee. He writhes on the ground full of pain but is not yet ready to follow the partisans. Thereupon they kill him.

But such action is rare. Usually captive enemy soldiers are taken to one of the two KDP prisons in no man's land. They are detained there until the Persians decide in favor of an exchange for captive Kurds.

During the long evenings at the campfire in the mountains we hear thousand and one stories. For example, this one: The father, a Khomeyni mercenary, the son a Peshmerga. During the first battle the two face one another fighting. The son kills the father with a hand grenade.

Nevertheless the Kurds have only one goal. Satar, age 30, who escorted us to Nowsud, Kurdistan's Beirut, as they themselves call it, sees it as his duty to fight so that his sons "someday can be born in a free Kurdistan." He has already paid a high price: one brother killed, the second in prison, the third a cripple.

Thus all Kurds know what they are fighting for; consequently military drill is unknown to them. Before every attack the leader leaves it up to his fighters whether or not they want to accompany him. Nobody is bothered by the fact that one of our men on the way to Nowsud turns back because of circulatory collapse.

High in the mountains, at the border between Iran and Iraq. The view of the distance, deep into Khomeyni's Kurdistan, incredibly beautiful. Innumerable mountains crests merge into one another. The deep valleys only a few hundred meters wide; raging streams in them that are mined in some places. The place of our border crossing was well chosen this time, too, is controlled by partisans. While looking for something to hold on to, we crash downhill a gravel slope under a blazing sun for hours.

At dusk we approach the embattled town of Nowsud. The muffled rumble of artillery crashes through the silence. "Watches and anything that glitters into the pants pockets. And absolute silence," Satar, our leader, orders as we later feel our way down a mountain trail during a pitch-black night. In 2 hours the moon will have risen; we must be past the danger spot before that.

On a hill, in shouting distance of Iranian Revolutionary Guards at their guns. We stumble, sweat with fear. When we have almost reached the goal, a flare bursts in the immediate vicinity. We rush for cover. Silence. Waiting. A spark of the flare ignites the scorched, tinder-dry grass. Minutes later we hurry on to be submerged at long last in the protection of the gardens below the town of Nowsud. Fire blazes in the citadel: The partisans have blown up part of the conquered Khomeyni fortress.

At 0530 hours the following morning. Even before the two Iranian garrisons a few hundred meters from the city's edge come to life, we scurry through what remains of Nowsud. Later on in the day this venture would be sheer suicide. It becomes evident to us why the Kurds call this place their "Beirut": collapsed and bullet-riddled walls, snapped light poles, bomb craters, bullet holes in facades and doors; car wrecks wracked by machine gun salvos and burnt out, sandbags in shreds; street signs on house ruins in which no one has been living for a long time. The ornamental pond of a former teahouse flooded lower-lying ruins. "In the olden days the men played backgammon here and drank tea," our leader Satar wistfully recalled.

The town which is now in the buffer zone between Iranians and Iraqis used to number nearly 5,000. As recently as 7 years ago it was an oasis in the midst of inhospitable mountains, about 5 kilometers from the Iraqi border. Fruit was available in abundance; the plantations established centuries ago below the town bear rich fruit even now. Eleven families and other former Nowsud inhabitants now living in the gorges near the city are not kept from taking care of their plantations even by the daily skirmishes.

One of those persevering is Salim. He is far over 80; his wife was killed last year when parts of a wall of a house ruin crashed down. Since then he lives by himself in the ruins: one of 49; more than half of these people are too old to flee on foot to the valleys and gorges a few hours away. Next to Salim there sit the 10 Peshmergas who hold the positions against the enemy Persians. One of the rebels, Rahman, has his family here. His wife and three children--3, 5, and 8 years of age. The little ones grow up under daily artillery fire.

When the Iraqis in late morning cover several positions of the Iranians with gun salvos and the latter answer the fire, the children are not even startled in their playing. Rahman's oldest child bravely tells his anxious mother: "Today they are shooting with 60-millimeter guns."

Murder rarely takes a rest. And there is hardly a family which does not have deaths to mourn. Hardly anyone who was not hit once by an enemy bullet or a grenade fragment.

We had frequently heard stories on our travels about the legendary combat morale of the Peshmergas. On 7 August 1986 the Kurdish rebels permitted us to participate in an attack on an Iranian military convoy.

A machine gun of the attackers pounds the convoy without warning. Seconds later Kalashnikov salvos rain down. Even a first panzerfaust becomes a direct hit; the military truck traveling along the gravel road

immediately burst into flames. The Jeep following directly behind stops when a second panzerfaust hits.

The two vehicles become blazing coffins for the completely surprised Iranian soldiers. The few who escape are killed like rabbits on the cleared area next to the dust runway. Two Iranian soldiers surrendered to the still wildly attacking Peshmergas. The blood of those killed in action sticks to their uniforms.

The over 500 Revolutionary Guards in their nearby fortress protected by earthworks react helplessly. Blindly they fire air defense guns; they can no longer help the 12 killed in action from their ranks by that action. The large-caliber grenades of the Persians hit the mountain slopes while we are already panting up the narrow path to the top of the pass.

Everyday life in Kurdistan, only one of thousand examples of the helpless revolt of an oppressed people which fights a forgotten war without any publicity. A war in which the most important questions remain unanswered. What happens to the Kurds when the bloody regimes of Iran and Iraq do agree at some time to an armistice? But above all: Where is the involved world public which occasionally has more vehemently championed a bird species threatened with extinction than the 20 million Kurds, the biggest people in the world without a state of its own?

12356

CSO: 4620/ 30

PALESTINIAN SOCIAL CONDITIONS CALLED SHOCKING

Jerusalem AL-FAJR in English 19 Apr 87 p 4

[Article by Awad Abdel Fattah]

[Text]

Shocking data on Palestinian social conditions inside the 'green line' were revealed in a one-day conference held in Nazareth April 11.

The conference, the first on this subject, was organized by the Nazareth Graduates League. It issued a set of resolutions calling, among other things, for an end to discrimination and for equality between Palestinians and Jews in Israel.

Although the Israeli government boycotted the conference and Israeli Minister for Social Welfare Moshe Katzav issued an order prohibiting the Arab heads of social services sections from attending, 70 percent of Arab social workers attended. Two Arab members of Knesset; 39 heads and members of Arab local councils; 74 education workers; and 70 unionists, doctors and lawyers were among 457 delegates at the conference. One hundred and forty-four women attended, 31.5 percent of the delegates.

Eight prepared papers were discussed: "Access to the Social Conditions of the Arab Masses," by Dr. Sami Jaraysi, head of the government-run Juvenile Probation Office; "The Symptoms of the Economic Situation of Arabs

in Israel and its Reflection on their Social Conditions," by economist Ibrahim Malek; "Juvenile Delinquency and Criminal Acts in the Arab Sector," by Samih Rizeq, deputy head of the Probation Department in the Arab sector; "The Social Conditions of Arabs in Mixed [Arab-Jewish] Cities," by attorney Nassim Shaqar; "The Arabs of the Naqab and the New Situation," by Ishaq al-Atawneh; "Social Conditions," by social worker Jihad Sa'ad; "The Budgets of the Social Services Offices," social worker Farouq Abd al-Hai; "Treatment Services and Complementary Services," by Hikmiyyeh H'ahel, director of the Social Services Office in Nazareth. Because of the prohibitions on attendance, some of the papers were read by people other than their authors.

A number of vacant chairs were placed on the conference dais. Each had a sign with the missing person's name and the information that she or he had been "prevented from participating."

Marwan Dwairi, coordinator of the conference's activities and head of the Nazareth Academic League, opened the conference, in place of Samih Rizeq, who had been prevented

from attending. Dwairi said that the Arab masses had rallied around the conference and its objectives with all their representative bodies; especially the regional committee of the Arab local councils and the Committee for the Defense of the Land. He said that they had "succeeded in recruiting all the Arab social workers in all the government offices, and had set up preparatory committees in all areas. We reached the conference today after 40 symposia in different parts of the country."

Dwairi condemned what he called the "hostile attitude" taken by the Israeli government. "Instead of coming to present its position on the issue of equality, it decided to fight the conference," he said. He also warned the Israeli ministry, on behalf of the conference, against taking measures against the social workers who had defied its prohibition order.

Among the speakers were Nazareth Mayor Tawfiq Ziad; Reverend Shehadeh Shehadeh, head of the Committee for the Defense of the Land; and Israeli professor, Binyamin Yanov, who described the conference as a wonderful prelude to the struggle for a just cause. The conference

also received 59 letters of support from various local institutions, societies, and committees.

Ibrahim Malek's lecture on the economic situation and its reflection in social conditions was extremely enlightening. Malek documented a relationship between the economic and social situation of Palestinians living inside the 'green line' and official Israeli policies. He argued that the Israeli government aims to achieve two objectives: first, the destruction of the Palestinians' economic base by dispossessing them of their land; and second, the permanent economic subordination of the Palestinians to the Zionist economy. Palestinians were to be rendered a source of cheap labor and a market for goods produced by Jewish factories and farms.

Malek said that Israeli policies of depriving Palestinians of their land and destroying Arab agriculture has forced the Palestinians to work on Israeli projects as low-paid laborers. "This policy, coupled with discrimination in budgets for Arab local councils and deprivation of their rights to development budgets, maintained low incomes for Arab families. This, in turn, created social problems," he said.

Regarding housing conditions, Malek said the Arab sector

has been deprived of housing projects, "something which has driven the population to build houses through its own initiative and hard efforts. But Palestinians are then faced with the policy of demolition." In 1985, some 24 percent of Arab families lived with three or more people per room; whereas in the Jewish sector, only 1 percent lived in such crowded conditions. The majority of Arab families still face housing problems, he said.

Jihad Saad spoke of the severe shortage of social workers in the Arab sector. "According to the regulations of the Israeli Social Welfare Ministry, the Arab sector needs about 680 social workers; but there only 116." Examples of discrimination are everywhere, he said. "Shafa 'Amr, an Arab town of 24,000 people, is only budgeted for three and a half workers, while the predominately Jewish Upper Nazareth, with the same number of people, is given 15 workers."

Other lecturers presented more data about social conditions in the Arab sector, using data about the Jewish sector to illustrate the extent of discrimination.

Resolutions

The conference resolutions all attacked discriminatory Israeli policies against the Palestinians in Israel and called for an end to these policies.

The conference called for the allocation of sufficient budgets for social services. It expressed its complete solidarity with the Arab social workers' struggle to improve their working conditions. It called for a halt to land confiscation and for allocating land to Arab towns and villages in accordance with their development needs. It called for the building industry in the Arab sector to absorb the unemployed Arab workers; for building housing projects for young couples; and for opening social welfare offices in every town and village. (Only 11 offices currently exist in the 105 Arab villages and towns). It also called for social services in the Arab sector to complement those in the Jewish sector; for paying special concern to the problems of juveniles and young men; and for making radical changes in the educational programs in Arab schools.

The conference appointed a follow-up committee to pursue these issues among various Israeli and popular departments and institutions.

/9274

CSO: 4400/221

OFFICIALS RECEIVE CUBA'S ESTRADA FOR TALKS

LD091807 Kuwait KUNA in English 1313 GMT 9 Jun 87

[Text] Kuwait, 9 June (KUNA)--A visiting Cuban official held a second round of talks here Tuesday with officials at the Foreign Ministry.

Director of North Africa and the Middle East Department at the Cuban Foreign Ministry Ulysses Estrada met today at the ministry's headquarters with head of the Economic Department Faysal Salih al-Mutawah then with head of the Press and Culture Department 'abd al-Azia 'isa al-Khodhir.

Al-Mutawah told KUNA that the meeting centered on the issue of international debts and the difficulties confronting a solution for this problem.

He added that the Kuwaiti and the Cuban sides agreed on an immediate endorsement of a new international economic system to resolve the debts issue.

Al-Mutawah went on saying that he and the Cuban official related to bilateral economic relations and also broadening trade exchange between the two countries.

In the same respect, al-Khodhir told KUNA after meeting with Estrada that talks examined bilateral cultural relations and means of enhancing them.

He said that he told the Cuban official of a near visit by undersecretary at the Foreign Ministry Sulayman Majid al-Shahin to the Cuban capital to strengthen bilateral relations in all fields.

He said that both sides expressed similar views on issues of common interest, in their capacity as non-aligned countries.

He pointed out that positions of both countries are very much alike toward several global issues such as disarmament, racial discrimination and supporting national liberation movements.

Estrada, who accompanied the Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malierca on his recent visit to Tehran and Baghdad, also held talks with al-Shahin and with the acting director of the Political Department 'abd al-Azia al-Sharikh.

Estrada briefed ministry officials on outcome of Malierca's talks in the Iraqi and Iranian capitals.

/12232

CSO: 4400/222

PAPER SAYS FREE SHIPPING ONLY 'PART' OF PROBLEM

JN061622 Kuwait KUWAIT TIMES in English 4 Jun 87 p 4

[Editorial: "Illusion and Reality?"]

[Text] Once again it seems that the United States may be falling into the fallacy of mistaking a part for the whole. That's the first impression about the labours of its two peripatetic senators. They have been going to great lengths in trying to emphasise the importance of 'joint,' 'multinational,' 'international,' approach and remedy for the problem facing shipping in the Arab Gulf. That's fine. But they stop noticeably short of being clear and precise about these qualifications. After all what is 'international' if of course also joint and multinational. But also much more than that. More often than not, when U.S. spokesmen use these terms they wish to be saying no more than the United States and such of its allies as would care to join in a given situation. This kind of proposition suffers not only from a nagging uncertainty but also inadequacy. You cannot rule out all chances of confusion either. The senators may have a case in making a virtue of imprecision in the name of flexibility. Even so, it will remain something of a mixed virtue. Some significant aspects remain to be seen. The parties concerned would look forward to them with no small interest.

That said, we return to the point. Security and freedom of shipping in the Gulf is undoubtedly a matter of vital interest not only to the Gulf states but the whole world. But with all that, it is only a part of the real problem in the region. In fact, it is an offshoot of a much bigger and vastly more complicated malaise which has been tormenting and bleeding the Middle East. Treating the symptoms does help. Often it is of the highest priority. It brings relief, even instant relief. To be persuaded to believe that temporary relief is, or would bring, permanent cure is to be inordinately gullible. The U.S. senators seemed to be aware of this, however vaguely. Their volunteered reference to the marines' experience in Lebanon was quite appropriate to the context. Assuming that the lesson has gone home there is still no concrete evidence that it has generated the wisdom and the will one should have expected as a result. The Middle East has been turned into a graveyard of many things: U.S. hopes, wishes, plans, and designs most notable among them.

If our reading of the senators' thinking is even remotely correct, there appears to be a realisation in Washington that things have gone woefully awry in this

part of the world. But they don't seem to be able to identify what and where. It may not be out of place here to state once again that the U.S. squint-eyed evaluation of Israel-vs-others in the heart of the Middle East is at the root of all the blood-letting, destruction and misery of millions of people. And all the humiliations that the superpower United States has had to pick up in the Middle East are traceable to this blind spot of the mightiest power in human history. Driven by what can quite properly be described as its pro-Israel craze, the United States has found itself committing blunder after blunder until it is now in the spot that it is. Successive administrations in the United States have single-mindedly tried to impose Israel as the bully to boss over the rest. But not all the pumping could make an elephant out of an ordinary bug. It is time the United States called a halt to that utterly futile and insupportably expensive misadventure. It has hurt the United States no less than the atrociously wronged people of the Middle East.

The very primary interests of the entire world demand that all shipping in the Gulf should be free, smooth and completely safe and secure. Every effort in that direction must be made and made without loss of time. There just cannot be two opinions on so clear a fact. And sincere and genuine efforts to do the right thing at the right time and place cannot necessarily be the exclusive right or responsibility of this power or group of powers or that. People can serve a deserving cause jointly or severally, if the intention is honest and strategy intelligent and efficient. Whatever administers best to the needs of the situation is the best remedy. To be doctrinaire on this point is to be half-witted, if not worse.

In conclusion, we must reiterate the point: What the Middle East needs is the restoration of peace based upon justice. If that kind of peace is restored, the rest will follow. On the other hand if the people of this region are denied basic justice, half measures will produce no more than the illusion of relief.

/12232

CSO: 4400/222

COMMENTATOR CALLS FOR RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY

Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 24, 25 May 87

[Article: "An Appeal for Contemplation"]

[24 May 87 p 1]

[Text] "Two men can sleep in one bed but each will dream of something the other one does not" (Chinese proverb)

We hope that the breezes of this virtuous month will be an opportunity for thought and recollection. Life goes on and the effect on the world's procedures and the causes of society are interlinked and ramified.

These are letters which contain general points of view we are presenting to senior officials in the government by way of contributing to an appeal for quiet contemplation charged with hope and prosperity.

A Letter to Shaykh Sa'd

Under inspiration from these pure, blessed days of the Ramadan of fragrance, with its nights charged with incense, prayer and supplication, I do not want to look behind and to the rear much. Such a moment stolen from the hope of the future and the morrow might be sufficient for stumbling or falling.

We are in a society which cannot bear to fall or stumble more than we can tolerate it or more than the possibility of falling can itself tolerate it.

Back seats are the fate of people who stumble in this period of time, a time of dormant emotions and languid sensations.

A person who stumbles repeatedly might not even find an isolated place in a dark corner of life for himself.

We do not want the land or its people who live on it to burn more than they have already been burnt.

A destructive war is on the flanks and at the gates. Blood is flowing on the ground, people are bewildered and the future is being sought through a road which will guarantee it life.

Problems are interconnected and complicated and will not tolerate delay.

What Do We Want, And What Do the People Want, from You?

Many things.

Many concerns.

Moreover, much hope.

Because I know, as others know, the extent of the love in your heart for Kuwait, and because I feel as others do the extent of the importance of the citizen in your conscience:

I am conveying to you some of the things people are thinking about, and some of their concerns.

By these I do not mean their concerns related to food, clothing and housing. These are executive matters which will be granted a full opportunity for dissemination when the competent ministers are written to, God willing. I mean, rather, the concerns of civilized man.

In Kuwait there now is an appeal which concerns people and life. People are saying, Kuwait, then only Kuwait.

People are raising their heads and extending their vision beyond their feet, to the whole world, the Arab environment, then the wide world around us.

Both are desired, and we cannot be put in a strongly sealed case. Rust will be the fate that is to be anticipated, and we cannot live without identity in a time which has been distinguished by tempests and winds.

We are certain about some things and worried about others.

This is an appeal for profound thinking: where have we been, where have we come, and where are we now, by the criteria of life and the situations of nations?

This is an appeal for calm thinking to create the desired balance between the philosophy of the country's political framework and the whispering of citizens in al-Diwaniyah about their personal rights.

It is an appeal for thinking in a pure spirit about our internal affairs with their exacerbated complexity and growing effect, our affairs which we understand well but are afraid to talk about.

I view the new days as days of hope and welfare.

I view them as new days for Kuwait from which we can dispel the veil of doubt and the fog of sorrow and feeling of frustration by means of strong, honest administration.

We are just a dot on the surface of the great earth, and we are well aware of our position. However great the part grows, in its smallness it will

hold fast to the same components, the same flavor, the same color and the same aroma.

Political, economic, social, behavioral and human problems and interconnections.

We just want more profound thought about man himself, his mind, his spirit, his worth and how he wishes life and living to be.

We want these days to be the beginning of a change in the notion of the feeling, on the part of some people, from having politicians always believe that the country is their property, to what all and everyone has aspired to over the periods and years and what the scholars of history, politics and the behavior of societies understand -- that countries create and nurture statesmen who belong to them and whose memory they preserve.

That is a burden of great change, your highness the crown prince.

In conclusion, these statements do not bear more than their meaning, no matter what potential men might see in them for imagination; they are as they are in my thought and mind and in their simplicity, a sincere, honest appeal for a review and for thought.

[Signed] Yusuf Muhammad al-Samit

[25 May 87 p 1]

[Text] "Small minds discuss persons, medium minds discuss things, but great minds discuss principles, ideas and values" (Chinese proverb)

A Letter to Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad

Principles and goals are the focal point of our appeal for thought and dialogue. We know you well, and others know you, as a statesman of the first order. Your features have been and remain distinctive in the image of Kuwait in people's eyes. Let us go beyond the knowledge of the legal framework of your responsibility to the actual situation in Kuwait, of which we are well aware. In view of the important role you possess, the request is made of you that the internal situation's claim on your attention be at the level of the interest and concern you have devoted to Kuwait's foreign policy, where it has become a distinctive model of balance and harmony in a disturbed era of intertwined interests, lined with behavior and caprice.

My appeal to his highness the crown prince has been that Kuwaiti man should be the focus of the thinking of the government's higher political leadership. Let me repeat today the hope and wish, from you, that attention to drawing up clear lines regarding the notion of the relationship between man and the government will be one of your basic concerns.

I have a feeling, and I hope that it is sound, that it is the minister of state for foreign affairs who is now taking charge of monitoring the country's foreign policy, which is what is in keeping and in harmony with

the situation being frequently discussed, that Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad is now wholly free to concentrate on and monitor three basic issues which are the preoccupation of the regime, the government and the people. First is the Iraqi-Iranian war and the psychological and real pressures Kuwait is enduring because of circumstances of place, facts of geography and history and the attempt to avoid the flames of the fire Iran is pouring on the region, on Kuwait and on our economic and commercial interests. Second is the issue of Kuwait's national security and the local concerns with historic roots that surround it, like those people who bear the label "non-Kuwaiti" or "without" or "of unspecified nationality," and the citizen's relationship to the government and his role in stability. Then the third is prosecution of the Kuwaiti role as the head of the Organization of Islamic States for the next 4 years.

"Kuwait's national interests" are being spoken of frequently these days, as a lofty goal which everyone is working to reach and to achieve, but the question which one might ask is, how do we achieve Kuwait's national interests? Is achieving them just something which is connected to desire, hopes and appeals? Is spelling them out a platform which only the government is familiar with?

I do not want, and do not have the ability, to define the notion of higher interests, but I view them and sense them through an awareness of some basic attributes of the Kuwaiti individual and man, through his actual participation and contribution.

I imagine that the period of independence which Kuwait has pursued up to now has well underlined the notion that I am talking about, and has nurtured a delicate characteristic which everyone loves, and which has been the object of everyone's appreciation in Kuwait and its political regime, which is distinctive in the region.

Though the assessment now is that Kuwait's interests require a specific mode of political life, returning to roots and principles remains a human hope.

Doctors say that "daydreams" are a manifestation of complex life, when people cannot find an opportunity for self-expression.

I hope that the year 1987 will be the beginning of "daythinking" so that people will sense purity of thought and purity of spirit.

I hope that Sabah al-Ahmad will be behind this hope.

[Signed] Yusuf Muhammad al-Samit

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CSO: 4404/394

KUWAIT

NEAR EAST

BRIEFS

ELF COMMANDER LEAVES--Kuwait, 8 June (KUNA)--Chairman of the Executive Committee for the Eritrean Liberation Front [ELF] and commander-in-chief of the army, Abdullah Eddris [name as recieved] left here Monday after concluding a several-days visit, during which he met with Kuwaiti officials. According to a statement released here today by the Eritrean Liberation Front, Eddris informed the Kuwaiti officials on the latest developments of the Eritrean cause. Eddris expressed satisfaction over Kuwait's support for the struggle of the Eritrean people. [Text] [Kuwait KUNA in English 1213 GMT 8 Jun 87 LD] /12232

CSO: 4400/222

MOSCOW'S EXPANDED STRATEGY IN REGION DISCUSSED

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic 30 May 87 pp 16-19

[Article by Salim Nassar: "Red Lebanon"]

[Excerpts] Gorbachev's strategy in Lebanon: 1) removing American influence; 2) supporting Junblatt's authority; 3) protecting the Palestinian resistance; 4) opening dialogue with the Maronites in the region of Taniyus Shahin.

Lebanon's former ambassador in Moscow, Shaykh Khalil Taqi-al-Din, used to take a daily walk beginning at the embassy building on Samotechnnaya Street and ending at the bank of the Moskva River. During his routine strolls, he noticed that during the biting cold of winter there was always an old fisherman who had drilled a hole in the crust of ice in order to put his hook into the water, and who would sit all day waiting for fish. The scene repeated itself for a full month, but the basket remained empty. Once, the ambassador went up to the man and asked him in amazement, "I see you every day waiting for a fish in this spot. Don't you feel hopelessness?"

The old man smiled and answered with a tone of confidence, "The fish is bound to come!"

In the view of the ambassador and literary man Khalil Taqi-al-Din, writer of the story, "Tamara," this telling incident is a true image of the nature of Soviet foreign policy. Whenever he was confronted with a particular question about what he had learned from his experiences, he could find nothing better than this incident to demonstrate the quality of patience that marks Moscow's policy and makes it more stable and persistent in containing international crises. This way of acting has secured Moscow broad flexibility in confronting the geographic isolation that has dominated its long history, whether in regard to the countries of Asia or to those of the Middle East.

Gorbachev's Strategy in Lebanon

During the current Gorbachev era, Soviet diplomacy has crept into Lebanon through various channels it had never used before. It has entered Lebanon via the crisis of the South, Bkirk, the Palestinian resistance, and other forces

with which it has never before had dealings. The Russian Church's invitation to the Maronite patriarch is an indication of the emergence of an untraditional tactic for Moscow's relations with Lebanon. This is the first time the patriarch of the Maronites has been invited to visit the Soviet Union. Admittedly Gorbachev's moderate course has encouraged Archbishop Valerius head of external relations for the Orthodox Church, to consent to this invitation, which involves political risks in the Lebanese quagmire. However, it is also true that Gorbachev has replaced the Kremlin's previous role that Soldatov used to play with a more flexible and less involved role. The more active, aggressive role is being played by the new ambassador, Vasiliy Kolotusha, age 35. Vasiliy is known to have held the post of head of the Lebanon office in the Soviet Foreign Ministry after he ended his assignment in Baghdad as mission charge d'affaires. In terms of role and responsibility, he differs in his activity from his predecessor, who served in Cuba during the missile crisis and later on was expelled from Britain during a critical period. When Soldatov was appointed to Lebanon, the British newspapers wrote warning articles forecasting a major crisis due to his assignment, which coincided with the appointment of Ambassador (Goodley), well known for his plots in the countries of Asia.

Soldatov is a member of the Central Committee and one of the shapers of foreign policy in the Soviet Union. On the other hand, his successor, Vasiliy, is considered merely an executor of these policies. Based on an estimate of the size of the staff of the Soviet embassy in Damascus (40 persons), one notes that the Beirut embassy remains the largest in terms of numbers and importance in the entire Middle East. This is because Soldatov's functions went beyond the Arab states and extended to Iran. All of this is because Lebanon's chaotic condition allows for relative ease in the area of diplomatic movement and political activity, unlike the other Arab states, where the actions of foreign missions are subjected to the approval and constant surveillance of the security apparatus.

The last task assigned to Soldatov before he left Lebanon involved his country's approving the renewal of the International Emergency Forces operating in Lebanon, for the first time in the Security Council.

The ambassador said that the Kremlin, for the first time since the Korean War, approved of the role of the emergency forces and also approved of assuming any financial responsibilities for the renewal. This new position gave rise to various explanations. Some said that there was a change in Moscow's policy toward the mission of the international forces in the South. Others uncovered another, more important role in the Lebanese crisis, particularly since the plan for a solution proposed at the time by Soldatov to Prime Minister Karami concentrated on the need to isolate the Lebanon war from the influences of foreign forces and on the insistence that only the Lebanese could chart their own destiny. One can infer from this political trend that Soviet diplomacy was seeking a broader role through this proposal, a role which would remove Israeli influence from the South and lessen Syrian influence in Beirut, al-Biq'a, al-Jabal, and the North. Observers said at the time that Moscow wanted to use this position to reduce regional and international influences and interferences (such as those of Iran and America) which had weakened its role in Lebanon, made its allies targets of kidnapping and assassination, and made

embassy employees targets of attack. This had forced a major power such as the Soviet Union to ask for protection from Walid Junblatt. The call for help was recently repeated after the assassination of five senior communist leaders and members of the Central Committee, including the writer and thinker Husayn Muruwwa and Dr Hasan Hamdan. The general secretary of the Lebanese Communist Party, George Hawi, was forced to and warn that these liquidations serve only Israel.

The Lebanese Christian leaders have their own interpretation of the Kremlin's position. They say it is the prelude to presenting a solution like the Cyprus proposal, which was announced by the Soviet ambassador in Ankara, Vladimir Lavrov. Lavrov called for the withdrawal of Turkish and British forces, and the holding of an international conference to examine the question of neutralizing the island. Moscow's allies have criticized this interpretation and stated that Soviet Union participation in the international forces, even in a symbolic force from the Warsaw Pact, would give the Soviet Union an opportunity to influence the situation in Lebanon and weaken Western influence. However different the interpretations, the American-Soviet agreement signed at the beginning of last July has reconfirmed the two countries' cooperation to revive the role of the central government and not to retreat from supporting national unity and the sovereignty of the legitimate government.

Moscow's Constants and Variables

Before discussing Gorbachev's new methods, one must define Moscow's goals in Lebanon in order to determine the meaning of the new initiative and to review whether these methods really conflict with the constants in the policy of the Soviet Union.

It is rash to say that Moscow's policy in Lebanon has been subjected to a complete review associated with the requirements of the political program of the Gorbachev era. In fact the general constants in Soviet policy have not changed in 68 years. It should be noted that throughout this period the Soviets changed their tactics whenever difficult crises confronted them and whenever they were forced to avoid dangerous pitfalls, as happened in Somalia, Egypt, Angola, Mozambique, and Laos. This means that the Soviet position on Lebanon's role in the Middle East crisis has remained ideologically constant. The new aspects of the policy can be summarized as a concentration on preparatory measures and the consequences of these measures for expanded diplomatic activity. Such activity may lead to a demand to participate in proposed solutions at the international conference, whether these solutions deal with internal reconciliation or the crisis in the South, particularly since the proposed method now excludes American hegemony and supervision of bilateral agreements.

What then are Moscow's basic goals?

1. Lebanon as a country is not important in itself. Its importance follows from its existence in a strategic region such as the Middle East. The Kremlin's interest is not in the nature of the political system or the social situation; it is in the pattern of alliances, so that Lebanon will not play a

political or military role threatening the security of the Soviet Union. This explains Moscow's insistence on cancelling the 17 May Agreement, and its considering the Agreement a prelude to the return of the Western fleets represented in the multinational force. Gromyko therefore summoned the American ambassador, informed him that the American airplanes flying over al-Biqa' toward the Syrian border constituted a direct menace that could not be overlooked, and warned him of the undesirable consequences of military involvement in attacking Syria. He said that his country would intervene militarily to prevent any aggression.

When the official Soviet newspapers attacked the 17 May Agreement and considered it an addendum to Camp David, the former Lebanese foreign minister, Dr Elie Salim, sent the Lebanese embassy in Moscow a telegram asking about the reasons for the attack and asserting that the agreement in question was not directed against the Soviet Union, but was a Lebanese matter related to national security. The reply of the Soviet Foreign Ministry came as a great surprise. It considered the military consequences connected to the agreement's implementation to be detrimental to the security of the Soviet Union and the safety of its territory. The Foreign Ministry told the charge d'affaires of the Lebanese embassy that only two countries--Turkey and Syria--separated Lebanon from the Soviet border, and that approximately 2000 miles did not constitute a protective zone because of the American military bases situated throughout Turkey. He said that after the 17 May Agreement, Lebanon would turn into a NATO base and a center of hostility. This meant that pressures would surround the friendly nation of Syria, making Lebanese territory a starting point for a political card that the Soviet Union might play.

2. The Kremlin is pressing to keep the PLO in Lebanon and prefers that the PLO remain independent in its political decisionmaking, so it will not become a pawn of the other Arab states. Although the PLO is considered the Kremlin's most useful and effective tool in pursuing its policy in the Middle East, its disagreement with Syria is making the Soviets shift in favor of Damascus. This is because the alliance with Syria compensates for the departure of Egypt, and makes solutions to the region's problems unlikely without Moscow's participation.

3. The Kremlin prefers that Syria remain distant from involvement in Lebanon. Syrian control would prevent the Soviet Union from playing an influential role in events, no matter whether through the progressive parties sympathetic to the Soviets or through the Palestinian factions associated with them. Therefore, in 1976 Moscow advised Damascus to be careful about military intervention, and it did the same thing before and during the recent Syrian entry into West Beirut. At both times, Syria said it could not stand by as an onlooker while conditions deteriorated and disturbances increased in Lebanon. Diplomatic sources in Moscow report that Soviet leader Gorbachev brought up this subject with President Hafiz al-Asad during their recent meeting. The answer he received was couched in security and geopolitical terms, similar to the reasons that dictated the Soviet decision to enter Afghanistan. The Syrian president is said to have spoken in this context about other factors that make Lebanon a strategic flank and a center for the clash with Israel, and how this subjects the security system on the eastern front to collapse and

penetration. In al-Asad's view, this matter seemed more important and urgent than anything else.

From the recent diplomatic moves, one can infer that Moscow wants to realize these goals by various means. It has employed all the forces in the region toward this end. For fear of being drawn into a direct conflict with the United States, in its policy toward Lebanon Moscow joins with the European nations interested in the need to reinvigorate the legitimate government and national unity. Therefore it has opened new lines to the influential forces in East Beirut and has concluded that its political role makes it necessary for it to bring viewpoints closer together and contain the influence of those who bet on the success of its foes. This explains Moscow's rapprochement with Bkirki and its sending an invitation to Patriarch Nasrallah Safir to remove the obstacles that previously existed with the Maronites. It also explains why the American embassy in Beirut is so nervous about this intensified activity that one of the high officials in the embassy expressed his alarm in front of Dr Samir Ja'ja'. The American official told Ja'ja' that the Soviets were incapable of helping their allies. Would it be logical for them to support their enemies? This frank statement was intended to break off the ongoing dialogue with the Lebanese Forces. This attempt repeated itself with President Amin al-Jumayyil on account of the concerts and art exhibitions presented recently in "The House of the Future." For example, there was a string quartet concert from the Soviet republic of Lithuania, and the film "Zhukov's Victory" was shown by the Soviet cultural center in La Sagesse Cinema in al-Ashrafiyah. Naturally, this does not mean that Moscow has changed allies and friends in Lebanon. Rather, it means that its new strategy demands rapid movement on different fronts to help the spiritual and political leaders to formulate new convictions from which new positions may grow. Such preparation for the future requires that the Soviets must be ready to take an important step forward after observing a broad American step backward.

The means Moscow uses to realize its goals in Lebanon are not dogmatic and inflexible; rather they are flexible in many ways. The Lebanese Communist Party, whose individual members and fighters do not exceed 2000, is the traditional tool for manifesting the official Soviet position. At the same time, the PSP represents an extremely important political and military ally. This makes Walid Junblatt a vital link to the Soviets. This special relationship has endowed him with a fundamental role that has made him the frequent guest of the Central Committee. From the level of the conversations he habitually holds with the head of the foreign affairs department (whether Ponomarev or Dobrynin), it is evident that there is a special affection for the son of the late leader Kamal Junblatt, the holder of the Order of Lenin. In his recent visit, Junblatt obtained a promise of economic support for all the projects in the Shuf region presented by his friend Mukarram 'Alam-al-Din. He also obtained a promise to strengthen the arming of his 10,000-man forces and to complete the training program for the young people he has chosen to master complicated modern armament equipment. Whenever he visits the Soviet Union, Junblatt is interested in observing their examinations at the bases. The last group he congratulated was being drilled in the use of electronically guided artillery. Military men agree that the principal trained military force, ranking immediately after the regular army, are the Druze militias under the leadership of Walid Junblatt. This is something former ambassador

Soldatov helped to realize. Every year, he used to review part of these forces at al-Mukhtarrah, and would applaud enthusiastically whenever they passed before him with the dozens of tanks given by Moscow. Regarding the arming of the militias sympathetic to the Soviets in Lebanon, it is worth noting that Walid Junblatt obtains weapons directly, while the others are forced to buy them through a third party.

The third means relied on by the Soviets in Lebanon is represented by the PLO's positions, and by Soviet need to participate with the PLO in frustrating Israeli-American proposals. However, the disputes that have shaken the PLO have made the process of coordination between the two parties an activity fraught with danger, particularly after the departure of the PLO leadership from Lebanon and the outbreak of the war of the camps. In order to guard against the mistakes of involvement, Moscow has done its best to mend the split and pave new paths of rapprochement between Syria and the PLO.

The fourth means is linked to the legitimate government, with all the official manifestations it represents. The Soviets therefore avoid criticizing President Amin al-Jumayyil or the government out of a desire to keep the lines of contact open, despite criticism of the government by the Lebanese leftist parties. This rule was broken only once, at the time of the 17 May Agreement, because Moscow considered it a plot by the American State Department and Israel, and because its consequences touched on East-West security relations. The Soviets therefore always concentrate on their support for Lebanon's independence, unity, and sovereignty.

The American explanation of the expanded Soviet activity in Lebanon rests on political assumptions involving the isolation of Israel within the international conference, winning over the largest possible number of Arab states to the Soviet position, and exploiting the mangled economic situation to insure a suitable climate that would allow strict rightists to move into the ranks of the left. The Westerners support their argument by the increased quota for scholarships, which jumped from 400 in 1983 to approximately 1000 this year. In the past, this quota included the Communist Party (200), the Phalange (10), the Amal Organization (40), etc. Today, the quota has increased due to the lack of financial resources and because of increasing interest in enrolling in universities in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. If the minister of culture in Moscow boasts that the writer Mikha'il Nu'aymah, for whom a street in the capital there has been named, was one of the best advocates for the Kremlin's efforts and peaceful policy, just like Dr George Hanna (maternal uncle of Dr Clovis Maqsd) or Dr Rif (maternal uncle of Elie Hubayqah and the first doctor from Kisrawan to graduate from Moscow University), leader Gorbachev expects the American efforts in Lebanon to be subject to blockage and paralysis, as happened in the Gulf war and the Middle East crisis. Perhaps preparation with both the Christians and Muslims will lead to cancellation of the mandate given to the Western countries, a review of the role of the Soviet Union, and cooperation with the Soviet Union to solve the Lebanon crisis.

12937

CSO: 4404/383

ISLAMIC PERIODICAL CONDEMNS SOVIET ULTERIOR MOTIVES

Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 9 May 87 p 12

[Article: "Soviet Policy in the Region: Stifling the Islamic Revolution with an 'Arab Solidarity' Based on Settlement"]

[Text] When the imam and leader of the nation, Mr Khomeyni, may God preserve him, uttered a statement in recent days against the Soviet Union, that was not just a matter of bringing a principled position to mind -- it was also based on an understanding of the serious background which lies behind the Soviet Union's political movements in the current period. These have come to be governed by a basic, major preoccupation, which is to challenge the movement of Islam in the region and establish a balance with America based on a sharing of influence and imposition of capitulationist settlements.

Ayatollah Ardabili, chief of the supreme court in the Islamic Republic, used the same point as a basis when in the Friday sermon he attacked the Soviet policy vis-a-vis the Iraqi-Iranian war. Meanwhile the Iranian Foreign Ministry was issuing a statement in which it considered that the Soviet Union was "biding its time to impose an increase in its influence or to placate America's allies in the region."

A Primary Objective: "Stable" Relations with America

Indeed, current Soviet policy does seem so serious and direct as to prompt all these statements and preparations, because if we would seek to specify the Soviet Union's major objectives in the region in the recent period, in the light of the rapid developments which the international conference proposal has been witnessing, we would say that the effort to create "more stable strategic relations with the United States of America" is one of the main goals which is prompting the Soviet Union to include the issue of the regional crises within the limits of the security system connected to the nuclear problem, as Gorbachev broached it with Hafiz al-Asad during the recent visit to Moscow.

In this regard the policy of freeze and settlement which the Soviets are relying upon, in the context of the subject of disarmament and treatment of bilateral problems, is analogous to the treatment of such regional crises as the Afghan problem, the Gulf war and the Middle East crisis.

A Second Objective: Confronting the "Fundamentalist Threat"

However, the presence of this goal is tarnished somewhat when we bring up the other goal which has started to manifest itself with extreme clarity recently -- fear of the growth of the Islamic tide in the entire area. An Israeli expert, Shlomo Avineri, who previously was director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, expressed this in the optimum manner in the course of a symposium Radio Israel held on 4 April 1987 when he stated, "The Soviet position has held that the most dangerous thing in the Middle East would be the threat of the outbreak of a new war between Israel and an Arab country, but it seems to me that the Soviets now realize, in spite of the presence of this danger, which in their view is not a major imminent one at present, that the greater and more important danger in the Middle East is the emergence of Islamic religious extremism and the appearance of Islamic fundamentalism, which has its significance in the Middle East, just as it has its possible significance in the Soviet Union, especially in the weak point embodied in the Islamic presence within the Soviet Union itself. Consequently, while the Soviet Union's basic major adversity is no longer the outbreak of a war between Israel and Arab countries but the outbreak of Islamic fundamentalism, it is astonishingly apparent that there is an agenda common to Israel and the Soviet Union at least regarding this international issue, whose importance I have not denied."

The Israeli analysis here does not stop at considering the Islamic awakening one of the priorities the Soviets are working to challenge; rather, it considers this one of the things which have prompted or will prompt the Soviet Union to change the composition of its relations against the background of the emergence of newly arising common goals, as is the case in the relationship with Israel with respect to standing up to the Islamic resurgence.

In any event, now, while sorting out the individual aspects of this approach, it appears clear that the political movements in the region seem to be proceeding under the guidance of this orientation.

Vladimir Batrovsky, the Soviet deputy foreign minister, concluded his tour, which included Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, the Sultanate of Oman and Iraq, and declared in a statement to the Soviet news agency NOVOSTY his "total satisfaction with the results of this visit, considering that great possibilities exist for continuing the development of bilateral relations and carrying out a fruitful political dialogue with the Gulf countries on subjects which constitute common concern, especially the settlement in the Middle East, the halt to the Iran-Iraq war and the guarantee of freedom of shipping in the Indian Ocean basin."

It is well known that the Soviet Union has recently, in a conspicuous manner, taken a provocative position in its support for Iraq in its war against the Islamic Republic, and that it has declared its appeal for a halt to the war through an international conference along the lines of what has been proposed in the case of the Middle East crisis.

Putting the Arab Stage in Order

However, the Soviet Union, which in the past 2 weeks "ended" the Palestine National Conference with "great success" through its restoration of the

unity of the major Palestinian organizations and its maintenance of a hold over the general course of the Liberation Organization in the current period, has progressed toward a more advanced level for dealing with other steps. In addition to what we have mentioned in the framework of rapprochement with the countries of the Gulf as far as facilitating the holding of the international conference and solving the problem of the Gulf war are concerned, the Soviet Union, according to the statement of "an informed Jordanian source in Amman," is currently striving to achieve a reconciliation between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Syria and is carrying out secret mediation between Baghdad and Damascus. It has disclosed that a meeting was recently held between security officials from Syria and Iraq at the border of the two countries. Indeed there are people who have gone beyond that and say that a secret meeting was held between al-Asad and Saddam Husayn last week.

While the Soviets were trying to continue putting conditions in order pursuant to the Palestine National Conference and halting the disruption the meeting had caused in some interrelationships, Arab political movements seemed tied to the same pace or greatly affected by it, since we find among the Palestinians unremitting efforts to free up relations between the Palestinian organizations which participated in the national conference and Syria, in addition to urgent efforts to maintain a requisite minimum with respect to Palestinian-Egyptian relations. In this framework, specifically, one should include 'Arafat's visit to Iraq, where "an informed Palestinian source revealed that the organization is consulting at present with the Iraqi government in an attempt to contain the Egyptian-Palestinian crisis, and revealed that an emissary of the Iraqi first deputy prime minister Taha Yasin Ramadan presented the Egyptian prime minister, Dr 'Atif Sidqi, with a letter in this regard."

Fahd Is on the Road to Setting out Order and toward the Conference

In a great context of harmony, in the same regard, the Saudi King Fahd is active in the Arab framework. Following a visit to France he went to Algeria with the goal of having a tripartite meeting which would include him in addition to the Algerian president Chedli Bendjedid and the Moroccan king Hassan the Second with the goal of holding a dialogue between them on the Western Sahara problem, as a means for reducing the obstacles obstructing the holding of the Arab summit, because a minimum mutual Arab understanding is needed as an essential condition to facilitate the holding of the international settlement conference.

A Saudi source participating in the delegation that accompanied Fahd on his mission to the Maghreb provided a major explanation of that when he said, "The Saudi king attaches great importance to the success of this meeting, which represents a great step in his efforts toward realizing an opportunity for the holding of the 13th Arab summit conference in Riyadh and consequently accelerating the process of the holding of an international conference on the Middle East. Upon his return to Saudi Arabia, King Fahd intends to prepare for the holding of a summit meeting between the Syrian president, Hafiz al-Asad, and Saddam Husayn, and the Saudi crown prince, Prince 'Abdallah, who is considered a specialist in Syrian-Iraqi relations, will follow up on it."

The source pointed out that the Saudis appear optimistic, especially following al-Asad's visit to Moscow, because Gorbachev confirmed the importance of the rapprochement with Baghdad to al-Asad.

The Saudi step which Fahd next intends to carry out is to hold a meeting between al-Asad and 'Arafat.

Thus it most clearly appears that the Soviet movements to create Palestinian unity and Arab understanding and the Saudi, Palestinian and other movements all flow into two channels, in reality representing a single content in a single framework, which is to stifle the Islamic Republic and implant a defeatist settlement disguised by what is called the international conference. Each will lead to the other.

In spite of their seriousness and complexity, the Western, Eastern and Arab calculations of surrender, in their schemes, appear simplistic because they fail to calculate important unseen elements in the issue which the Western mind does not perceive, turning all the attempts in being into illusory calculations and goals, as the course of reality itself confirms day by day.

They Are Not Better Than the Americans

Anyone following Soviet statements in the recent period will find that the Soviets have assumed the rhetoric of settlement with great boldness and without contest.

The Americans, who had been dominant in respect to a settlement in the region for a long period, have phrased it in a manner which could be classified in the category of the impossible, while the control of the settlement, whose reins have been assigned to the Soviets at present, has placed it (that is, the settlement) in the realm of the possible.

It is a matter not just of the difference that exists between what is impossible and what is possible but also of other considerations, first of which is that separate deals, on the basis of the American platform, are separate deals first and last, while the international conference is called a "collective peace" aimed at devouring the region and digesting it in defeat and surrender, and also because the people advocating "separate deals" have not managed to change their form as a lethal, loathesome format for peace with Israel, while the international conference stands out as a revolutionary label or something politically to be hoped for which is not lacking in triumph, or as an attainment accompanied by honor and pride!

That is not the whole issue, because anyone reading Gorbachev's statement during his meeting with Hafiz al-Asad in Moscow will find an unparalleled drive toward settlement with Israel, mutual competition over phrases which cast doubt regarding military options, affirmation of Israel's security and right as a country and a blessing of Syria's role in its intent to proceed toward political settlement!

In the face of all this, what do the Soviets want and what are they aiming at?

While the Soviets are directing one eye to the settlement and the international conference, they are directing their other eye to the resurgence of peace in the region, since their experience with that is bitter and not much different from the Americans' experience.

They have tested it in Afghanistan in the course of a number of years which have produced only tens of thousands of Soviet dead and constant political relapses. The latest solution was advocated on this basis, and the statement by the Afghan president, Mohammad Najibollah, came as a negation of the description of the regime in Afghanistan as socialist and as a statement that it is proceeding toward the construction of a country which is compatible with the traditions of Islam, which the Afghan people live through. Such talk concerns only the concealment of the real face of the regime and an effort to throw the Islamic forces into confusion.

The Soviets lived through an experience with Islam through the Iraqi-Iranian war and the threat it engendered in the context of striking out at the interrelationships in the region, and the Soviet intervention occurred in accordance with the policy of supporting Iraq forcefully militarily and politically and working to impose a settlement on Iran.

They have also experienced Islam through its forceful initiative of struggling to establish a presence and liberation throughout the region, and the activation of the notion of the international conference then occurred.

The Soviet Union's embarking on the campaign of numerous settlements against Islam, including its old struggle with the Moslem people within the Soviet Union itself, reaffirms notions which have seemed flexible and lax at some times, which are that the Soviets are not one iota different from the Americans in terms of political danger, indeed are more dangerous than them in terms of ideological considerations as well, and this requires that light be shed on this fact and that the Soviets be assigned their proper place in the settlement calculations and the composition of the forces striving to strike at the interests of our Moslem people and arrogate their political present and future.

11887

CSO: 4404/398

VARIOUS GAS DISTRIBUTION FIGURES DEBATE CURRENT SHORTAGE

Beirut AL-KIFAH AL-'ARABI in Arabic 18 May 87 pp 34-36

[Article by A.A.R.: "The Distributors Deny and the Director General of Economy Confirms: Vessels Are In Short Supply, Have Been Smuggled and Are Corroded"]

[Text] A new shortage is beckoning on the horizon. It is the problem of a lack of gas in the West Beirut markets, and the reasons are the usual ones.

Yesterday, there was a supply shortage due to a lack of bread in the bakeries, and before that there was the gasoline shortage. All this because of the closure of the transit points between the two halves of the capital. In addition to that, the danger from the presence of gas vessels in our homes is no less than the crisis of the shortage of them in our markets, since information from technicians, which the acting director general of the Ministry of Economy, 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Ladhiqi, confirmed to AL-KIFAH AL-'ARABI, holds that the gas vessels amount to time bombs in our homes because of damaged vessels which are imported by the thousands and are repaired sketchily.

As for the gas shortage which the citizens have begun suffering from, that has turned into a hostage which is contributing, with other shortages, to tightening the noose of life around the Lebanese. Flammable gas is a vital commodity one cannot do without or suffer a shortage in, whether in daily activities or in a large portion of vital installations.

Consumption requirements are met through two sources, first through the domestic gas produced by the Tripoli and al-Zahrani refineries, which covers 20 percent of consumption, and second the gas imported from abroad through the legal and illegal ports stretched along the Lebanese coast. The volumes imported are generally stored in tanks which for the most part are in the eastern section, since the start of crisis in the shutdown of the transit points leads to the absence of the commodity on the markets.

The causes which are resulting in the exacerbation of the gas shortage include the absence of a reserve sufficient to the consumption needs of the Western section, since the shutdown of the transit points between the two

sections of the capital one day, and their reopening on another day, lead to chaos in the transportation of the commodity and consequently a drop in the reserves in storage with the filling and distribution companies and therefore a gradual disappearance of the gas.

A Temporary Increase in Prices

AL-KIFAH AL-'ARABI made a tour of the gas companies and after that sought answers from the Consumer Protection Department on gas matters in general.

The following conversation took place with Messrs Yasin and Muhammad Musulli from the gas distribution and filling company collective in West Beirut:

[Question] The new feature of the gas case is the decline in the quantities to be found in the markets as well as the difference in prices among the sections. The common denominator among them is that they do not commit themselves to the official pricing set out by the Ministry of Industry and Oil. What are the reasons for that?

[Answer] The absence of the commodity on the market is a partial one, and the reason is the shutdown of the transit points between the two sections of the capital. The western section meets its gas needs by transporting the gas on a daily basis from the tanks in the al-Dawrah section. The closure of the road compels the tank trucks to move over other routes, from the mountains to the al-Biq'a'.

This distance requires a whole day for going, a day for returning and another day for filling and emptying. Therefore the quantities which arrive are no longer the same, and in addition there is the increase in their cost. Therefore, our demand has been for a minor increase in prices which would temporarily cover expenses in awaiting the opening of the transit points.

The Danger of the Vessels

[Question] With respect to the vessels, there are specific specifications regarding all vessels so that they will be able to control the gas under pressure, for example, that the metal in them be no less than 3.5 millimeters thick. However, some Lebanese companies have decided and are deciding to manufacture vessels which are consumed locally, and the legal specifications in the interests of safety do not apply to them, since the metal in them for instance is no more than 2 millimeters thick.

[Answer] The manufacture of vessels in Lebanon goes back more than 30 years. There are a number of plants which engage in this industry in response to the requirement of the market. The products these plants provide are not sufficient and led to an ongoing demand for domestic vessels until a new plant was established in the al-Na'imah section during the recent period to meet these requirements.

The manufacture of vessels is subject to conditions and specifications which the Ministry of Industry has set out. These specifications are stringent, apply to the technique for manufacturing the vessels and are in the

possession of every entity which manufactures them or imports them from abroad. The complaints that unsound vessels exist are a matter of supposition. If these vessels had been unsound they would have exploded while being filled and consequently there is no room for such suppositions.

[Question] In the recent period especially large numbers of the vessels that are used -- use of which is not permitted in the countries of origin such as Italy, Belgium and France -- have been imported. Shouldn't they be prohibited, and not used in homes, when one bears in mind that the consumers usually are not experts on specifications and do not know that some of these vessels constitute an actual danger in their homes?

[Answer] The importation of vessels from abroad is not a sudden thing; dealings in them have been going on for many years. The statement that the imported materials have been damaged and are not fit for use is not true. These vessels are used not just in homes but also in hospitals, restaurants, schools, factories and in a large number of productive sectors. As far as the allegation that they are damaged goes, how could one rely on using them, or filling them in the first place?

[Question] What happens is the maintenance of the old vessels so that they become useable on the surface, which does not rule it out that they will break down, but does not make it seem obvious.

[Answer] This is impulsive talk and does not take account of the companies' surveillance of these vessels as they are being filled. Every vessel carries a label with the name of the manufacturing company and information on the operating pressure and the like. We have not heard any news about the vessels of a given company or heard that any vessel has been subject to breakdowns for years. The gas that is present in them is gas under pressure from within and it is filled under pressure. It is a material that burns rapidly and consequently the presence of breakdowns, rust or corrosion in any part of the vessels will be apparent during the filling and the company's responsibility hinges on refusing to fill them and destroying them or returning them to their owner.

Adulterated Gas

[Question] A drop in the quality of the gas with which the filling has taken place is to be noted. There is information that cheap imported gas with mediocre burning power is to be found in the market now.

[Answer] The quality and level of the gas is subject to import conditions which the Ministry of Economy and Oil dictates. Consequently, material which does not meet the conditions is rejected. For our part, the gas companies receive the material from the ministry as it receives it, and proceed with the filling and emptying. We have no connection with the quality of the material. One should bear in mind that we have not received complaints on this matter.

As for the acting director general of the Economy [Ministry], the chairman of the Consumer Protection Department, Mr 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Ladhiqi, he is

concerned with this subject and held a meeting in the last few days with representatives of the owners of gas filling and emptying companies to discuss the imminent shortage and work to avoid a shortage of the material on the market.

That would lead to the emergence of an additional shortage which would put pressure on the citizens who are laboring under the burden of the shortages. He answered our questions as follows:

Al-Ladhiqi Confirms

[Question] Questions are circulating concerning the disappearance of gas from the markets in the past few days. What is your information, by way of the Consumer Protection Department, and what are the means for remedying that?

[Answer] The gas shortage may be attributed to an initial cause, which is the impossibility of transporting the material between the two sections because of the security circumstances. Constant efforts are being made to guarantee the arrival of numerous commodities such as wheat, gasoline and gas in the western section, and in the course of this we hope that the problem will not become exacerbated so that it will not constitute another burden for the citizens.

Warranty Seals

[Question] What is the truth of the information being circulated concerning the quality of the existing gas vessels being used in the Lebanese market, since it is said that vessels imported from abroad have been working their way into Lebanon for years and they are old and almost broken down? Is this correct? How in your view is it possible to limit the flow of these vessels, which are supposed to be subject to precise inspections before permission is granted for their entry?

[Answer] I can say most unfortunately that the gas vessels, like all other foodstuffs and other consumer goods, in most cases come in through ports which are not subject to government surveillance and consequently these materials are not subject to investigation and tests to ascertain their fitness for use. Thousands of vessels which do not meet the legal requirements because of the thickness of the metal and so forth have actually been brought in.

The measures which are being adopted to limit imports of these vessels, which are European on most occasions, include the effort to assign the industrial research institute to carry out a tabulation and inspection of all vessels and prove their fitness for use. We are intending to put a seal on every vessel that has been examined and whose fitness has been confirmed, so that it may be set apart from others and consequently be fit for use.

The Distributors' Denial Is an Affirmation of the Charges

[Question] The owners and officials of gas companies insist that the vessels being handled are totally useable and that no news has been cited in the papers and the news of any damage resulting from them!

[Answer] Such talk confirms that the vessels have not been subjected to any examinations. In reports which have reached us, it appears that some of them actually are corroded. Most of them have not been examined for close to 20 years. Through observation and rapid inspection by hand, we can learn that empty vessels are abnormally heavy. The reason for this is that they contain sediment which has accumulated over the years in the failure to clean them out periodically.

These sediments, which could amount to 3 kilograms in weight, harm the consumer, first of all because they take up part of the vessel which is supposed to contain gas, and secondly because they constitute a threat to safe use. We have asked the scientific research institute in the person of its chairman, Eng Samir Samahah, to conduct oversight of samples from the vessels in circulation to clear up this matter.

A Temporary Increase

[Question] A question remains on the official price of the vessels and the rumor circulating about their absence on the market for various reasons, which as usual will soon lead to a rise in price.

[Answer] The Ministry of Industry and Oil has approved an official price which has been set at 110 pounds. As for actual conditions, these are that they are being sold at a higher price, ranging from 120 to 140 pounds according to area. This was before the crisis of the shutdown of the transit points in the past few days. Today the distribution and filling company has declared that it is compelled to raise the price, and the reason is the rise in cost and additional wages paid out because of the security circumstances. These companies are requesting an increase of 10 pounds. We as a Ministry of Economy are studying this demand and what we hope is that the new price will not be sanctified in a permanent fashion, in the event it is approved, but that it will be temporary, and lapse when the reasons and causes for this increase lapse.

11887
CSO: 4404/387

NATION URGED: TRANSLATE U.S. PRESSURE INTO SUPPORT FOR LEADER

Tripoli AL-JAMAHIRIYAH in Arabic 24 Apr 87 p 18

[Article by Sayyid Muhammad Qadhdhaf-al-Dam: "The Topic Revisited!"]

[Text] "To be or not to be:" that is the question which is being asked these days. What, I wonder, do we want?

How do we see history in the making after the U.S. raid? What do we want after al-Sa'idi spoke, confident that he will be heard directly by the Americans even when the interpreter was at a loss for words.

Al-Sa'idi is not only Mu'ammarr's son, but he is also your son. Did we or didn't we hear what he said?

The United States summoned all its intelligence resources for this incident. A maximum state of alert was declared in the White House and at the Pentagon. Making the satellite inaccessible to Libya was expected to be a matter of significance. And we saw our fellow citizens unite inside the United States. But what do we want?

"To be or not to be: that is the question." I ask the reader to allow me to write down my thoughts as a Libyan citizen who, like all other citizens, has the right to write. My wife does not write my thoughts for me even though writing is an arduous task. I think we should all stand on our own feet. Wearing shoes made at the Misratah shoe factory, not at that factory whose name I cannot recall but which manufactures shoes made out of alligator hides, our feet should be planted firmly in the ground. The people rose to the occasion, and the Americans and their clients were bewildered. Al-Sa'idi wiped out everything the American people had been programmed to believe about the Libyan people. Al-Sa'idi accomplished that feat as a child whose home had been bombed because his father spoke the truth and said no. Why should al-Sa'idi, 'Aishah, and the rest of the children suffer? What did they do? We were willing to die defending our leader. But some of us, just like any other person in Tripoli and Benghazi were sleeping comfortably after having had a meal, recharged our batteries, and carried out our duties as husbands.

The raid ended, and the world saw what had really happened. The world saw the challenge. A citizen of the world committed suicide to protest what had

happened. You saw the house yourselves, and you saw it on visual devices. Sayf-al-Islam, who had insisted on success, lost his notebooks, and 'A'ishah lost her toy. What do we want from this good family whose father leads the revolution with great enthusiasm? While some of us listen to the enemy's broadcasts and to rumors, he continues to stand tall and to be firm. There is no doubt that the revolution is strong, the Free Officers' movement is strong, and the loyal members of the revolutionary committees are strong. We no longer care about those who seek Egyptian bread sprinkled with sesame seed and Rothman cigarettes, nor do we care about exit visa applications for recreational purposes. We also do not care about those who ask for cars because we forgot about domestic animals and the old plow and are now looking for Caterpillar spare parts in the black market. The revolution is strong and standing tall. What do these shepherds, dwarfs and those who are wet behind the ears want? Do they believe that biased rumors affect us and our good people? They do not affect us at all. We are ready: we have the numbers, the equipment and the materiel. We are ready to act, not just to speak. We are being led by Mu'ammār al-Qadhafi just as he led us before and after the revolution. Some of us collapse from fatigue, and some of us fall back because of exhaustion, but the man goes on walking forward confidently. Why then are we trying to block his path and to stop him?

Shouldn't we be proud of the fact that young people travel and cross the oceans to talk with the leader? These young people have a greater sense of the revolution and what it is than those trivial visitors who come to Libya because they had received a personal invitation.

I know I have digressed: it is a bad habit I am trying to get rid of. At the same time, however, it is something new to me in the world of writing.

To write, a writer now has to be a fighter. The time when writing was above everything else is gone. We would sometimes overlook whatever writers left behind in hotel rooms as though we knew nothing about them. In this situation, however, writing is a great honor. The revolution does not have to hire writers who sell what they write, nor does it have to make agreements with such writers to write about Libya and its leader.

Al-Sa'idi ruled all out that. He destroyed the files in our archives and records office, and he exposed us completely. He said what was going on in our minds; he said what we wanted to say without receiving any payment from the media's budget.

Are we thinking reasonably and rationally as we see liberation movements taking our side? Are we thinking reasonably and rationally as time proves that what Mu'ammār al-Qadhafi had to say was right?

"To be or not to be:" that is the only question being raised now.

To be [or not to be] a strong, steadfast revolutionary who seeks death, rather than a life of pretense and stability! The new blood in the revolution is starting to react within us. Despite differences among the generations and despite young people's anger and their differences, we classify ourselves as ignorant soldiers, if you wish. You have to agree, however, that we are ready to

stand with you till the end without the revolution's leader and without the revolution and the power of the people. We do not have many ambitions. We've come to dislike traveling abroad. Now we think profound and in depth thoughts, and we question ourselves daily about our mistakes. Each one of us does what he can and sometimes even more than he can until he feels exhausted and worn out and falls asleep despite himself. In front of everyone we say that America does not scare us even though we recognize its power and its ability to strike and to wage war. We realize that the United States has mobilized its intelligence resources fully and that it paid millions to have al-Qadhdhafi overthrown, but al-Qadhdhafi did not fall. Doesn't Congress have the right to question U.S. intelligence about the money that was spent to silence the voice of truth? Didn't all of us, each according to his own ability, try to work and be creative?

Didn't we liberate ourselves from the desire to be afraid? The revolution does not compromise, and it will not retreat. Its leader is determined to move forward, and here we are with him body and soul despite the minor mistakes we made in our lives. These mistakes, however, do not impede our progress; we would get rid of them if we thought they would.

We are the mighty soldiers of the revolution's leaders, and we wish to fight, not for the sake of fighting, but to confirm the people's legitimate authority which others are trying to take away. The giant is now out of the bottle, and the people now have sufficient awareness. They are meeting in their people's congresses, talking about various topics, opening files and closing others. We are, nevertheless, moving in the right direction. We know the landmarks on the way. Mu'ammarr taught us to plan and to follow a road map. He taught us how to reach the target and the logical objective.

He knows that we are not outdoing each other. We love him because he is what we've been wishing for; we love him because he represents goodness and because he is the cure for all ills. He is true to himself: in his usual simple manner he joins people and the elderly to converse with them and relate history. Meanwhile, we paid millions to have history written. Did we forget to offer him the job? Do we have doubts about the truth of his version of history? What has come over us anyway, and what is it that we want?

Wherever we may go, we will never contradict our principles, nor will we ever be swayed from them. We do not doubt our people's ability to fight if matters become serious. It is at that time that the answer to the question will become clear: to be a free, self-confident Libyan citizen or merely a number on the municipalities' lists ruled by anyone who wishes to rule the people, issue them permits, obtain chewing gum for them, and make bars and prostitutes available. We will not be that way; we have already taken action, and our actions are a matter of record. And the action we will take again will be on the record despite our displeasure with those who spoke on the record and stated their willingness to die for the cause. Everyone has a right to take a stand on the record.

Conclusion

If it is true that we have to live, then we have to be free, strong and loyal to our leader. We are not to deceive him or lie to him. We are not to overstate our

abilities to get things done, and we are not to tell him that everything is all right. This man is old enough [to hear the truth], and his ideas have been in circulation throughout the world. No longer does he care about receiving a telegram expressing support from some conference. This is an international and a national man, and some of us are provincial to the bone. Will we get rid of our complex, forget our rancor and start all over again with a new vision and new blood? Will we begin making a careful examination of our road? Will we use meetings and discussions rather than cards and secret agency files to look at each other and find out who we are? We write not to fill up empty space in a newspaper, but rather to shed some light over the dark recesses of a reader's mind so he would know who he is and determine whether he is "to be or not to be."

Forgive me for being long-winded and for airing my thoughts in a disorderly fashion. The fault lies in my thoughts, not in me. Each idea wants to come out in the open, and I have only one heart, one mind, one pen and one gun.

Forgive me for not applauding. This article is over, but the discussion will go on.

8592
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CHAD SEEN AS VICTIM OF WESTERN CONSPIRACY TO 'KILL ARABISM'

Tripoli AL-JAMAHIRIYAH in Arabic 3 Apr 87 p 9

[Article by 'Abd-al-Ghani Qandil al-Zuwayy: "Let Tabá Become the Capital of Chad"]

[Text] Those who know about the problem of Chad and are familiar with it cannot study that problem without considering relations between Libya and Chad. In ancient times and in modern times as well when Libya was the Kingdom of Libya, the presence of American and British bases in the country was a heavy burden on all Libyan territory, which had suffered under a Fascist, settler base that had been using most of Tripoli and the coastal territory as its own plantation for its own commercial activities. That Fascist settler base had adopted a consumer approach as a way to penetrate Libyan society. All these conditions coincided with an attempt to lead Libyan Arabs away from their nation's issues.

The evacuation of three powers from Libya was done in less than 1 year. These powers had been an economic drain on the country where they represented a military colonialism which contributed to the subordination of the Libyan economy to western monopolies as represented by oil companies. These western monopolies, which gave the Libyan treasury crumbs and leftovers from their table, had penetrated the Libyan economy through the banks. Besides, British forces had joined the coordination effort with the tripartite aggression against Egypt and the free people of Port Said. The departure of several vessels from Tobruq on their way to the Zionist entity had been reported, and these British vessels had several times carried fuel, wool and sheep on board. Honorable Libyans do not forget that it was the British who trained the Zionist pilots who bombed Egypt's Bahr al-Baqar School at Abu Za'bal. These pilots bombed al-Mahallah al-Kubra, swooped down on Naja' Hamadi and made attempts to bomb the High Dam, symbol of Arab pride in the fraternal country of Egypt. It is no secret to fellow Arabs throughout the Arab homeland, from the ocean to the gulf, that Wheelus Base was a threat to the security and safety of the Mediterranean, the cultural bridge between the Arab homeland, Europe and the remaining countries of the world.

Anyone who has been following African issues knows about U.S. support for reactionary alliances that grew out of the Wheelus base. The United States supported, among other matters, interventions in the Congo and elsewhere.

On the other side of Chad Zionists headed by the Rothschild family had spread out in that country near the protection of U.S. bases in Libya. FROLINAT leaders know that quite well; they had seen it in the coalition of French, Israeli and West German companies in Chad doing business in cotton, animal hides, cattle and wine. This coalition was accompanied by the creation of a split in Chad which manifested itself in keeping north Chad backward, ignorant and disease ridden. That was clearly evident in the fact that subjects of the imperialist church, who had been educated under French colonialism, were given power over their fellow Chadians in the north. Chadians found no one adopting their rights and standing by their side at international gatherings but the Libyan Jamahiriyyah. Libya gave the people of Chad everything they needed to achieve victory over the dictatorship which was oppressing them from Fort Lamy.

Suffice it to say that those who had been expelled from al-Jamahiriyah--those who have been leaving the country since the first year the announcement of the revolution in Libya was made--turned to the client regime in Fort Lamy to launch their first attempt to abort the revolution. They worked with all colonialist forces which had been expelled from the Libyan Jamahiriyah and with the scattered remnants of the collapsing reactionary monarchy.

Responding to the revolutionary alliance between the First of September Revolution and FROLINAT, the Chad Liberation Movement, Libyan forces invaded reactionary strongholds, and the symbols of colonialism in Ndjama fell. Goukouni Oueddi arrived in Ndjama with the National Unity Government, and Libyan troops left Chad after that to emphasize that their role had been one for peace and freedom.

It was then that Habre went to East Chad to put an end to the National Unity government in Ndjama. Habre was supported by Numayri, the man who had smuggled the Falashas to the Zionist entity. Habre went to East Chad after his meeting with al-Sadat in Aswan where the final details were worked out for Habre's alliances with Numayri, with the Zionist entity, and with colonialist countries searching for their own strategic alternative to Libyan territory from which they had been expelled. It is here that the strategic inseparability of Libya's and Chad's security comes into play: for the two revolutions, in Chad and in Libya, that goes beyond state borders and extends into the area of security and strategy. Today there is nothing unusual about the fact that Habre's and al-Sadat's meeting is being touted by western broadcasts and by Israel's broadcasts in Cairo. It is no secret that the Israeli embassy's neighbors in Cairo are the scattered remnants of the Libyan monarchy.

It is curious that Numayri's successors, al-Sadat's tokens, South Africa, Grenada's and Vietnam's killers, France, and Zaire, Israel's imperialist plantation in Africa, all allied with Habre, are meeting in Chad to abort FROLINAT's Revolution which broke out to extricate Chad from the clutches of racism, backwardness, and ignorance. FROLINAT wants Chad to break away from its alliance with the reactionary camp. It is also curious that most factions of the FROLINAT Revolution turned down Habre when he attempted to join them. The League of Chadian students in France had referred to him from the outset and called attention to the fact that he was working for France and for the Zionist enemy. Habre had tried to oppose the release of Mrs Kloster whose release from imprisonment Libya and FROLINAT had tried to secure on humanitarian grounds.

Today, France is using Habre to do its bidding in the problem of Chad. He is France's best bet for disciplining Chadian revolutionaries, particularly Tibesti residents who have historical and geographical ties with Libya. France is trying to create a strategic split between the two by starving Tibesti's rebels and exterminating them in an operation that Habre himself would lead until he too is eliminated when France plays out its game in Chad.

Chad was liberated by the strategic alliance between FROLINAT and the First of September Revolution. But all the tokens of Habre's alliance, Zionists, representatives of the alliance between Zaire and South Africa, and the scattered remnants of Numayri's and al-Sadat's regimes, are returning to Chad and coming up with trivial reasons to damage the relationship between Libya and the fraternal country of Sudan, a country that knows better than any other country about the guerilla movements which have been led by Habre to eliminate the (Berti) tribes on Sudanese territory. Habre's guerillas steal that tribe's cattle, threaten tribespeople and kill Sudanese security officers and security personnel in Mellitt and several areas in Sudan. It is known that Numayri's symbols--and Numayri is the man who smuggled the Falashas and is supported by the intelligence services of the Camp David regime--are devoting their efforts to attempts to reintegrate the Nile Valley with Camp David. This is a last ditch attempt to kill the spirit of Arabism and challenge in our Arab nation. Numayri's symbols are using Chad to foil the Arab force which is struggling, now that fraternal Iraq's capabilities as well as those of the Iranian Revolution, the Arab nation's strategic ally regarding the question of liberating Jerusalem, have been drained. Fellow Arabs should do everything they can to pay attention to Islam's two holy sites in the Arabian Peninsula, the birthplace of Arabism and Islam. Arabs, take heed: you attended an Islamic Summit at Camp David and you failed to acquire an Arab understanding of the liberation issue at an Arab meeting. Those who pretended to forget about Taba and failed to protect Sulayman Khatir are those who remember Ndjamena's Habre. They are the ones using al-Sadat's Aswan pact to protect a Zionist client.

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NATION URGED TO PLACE SELF COMPLETELY IN AL-QADHDHAFI'S HANDS

Tripoli AL-JAMAHIRIYAH in Arabic 3 Apr 87 pp 10, 11

[Article by Sayyid Muhammad Qadhdhaf-al-Dam: "The Topic Revisited: What Do We Want from Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi?"]

[Text] And what does this Arab youth who has emerged in our midst and become part of our history, our geography and our literature want?

We used to tend sheep, and meeting the administrative officer used to delight us. We used to kiss the young man's sweaty hands when his hands and forehead would be covered with perspiration because the administrative officer's guards had kept him away from the administrative officer's residence. When we were chasing neighborhood girls and dreaming about visiting America and Britain after seeing movies from those countries, that young man was meditating. We used to applaud the heroes of those movies as though they had opened to us the gateways to the world and liberated Palestine. The young man would sometimes go along with us to be civil, but he would be uncomfortable watching the movie because he spent most of his time thinking, formulating theories and planning for the revolution. He took along with him those of us in whom he saw signs of rejection, and he overlooked the conduct of some of us because he did not wish to interfere in our relationship with God.

He carried his weapon, and he forced us to carry ours to occupy the radio broadcast building and public facilities and to prove who he was and who we were. In the evening on the 1st of September, U.S. patrols had stopped a few Libyans on (al-Milahah) Road and asked them to identify themselves. U.S. patrol officers were acting as though they were in their own country. The young man relieved us of the burden of fear, and we went out in demonstrations, chanting and singing with joy. We hosted banquets for the soldiers who carried out the death order which was issued to them by the leader. Each young person acted on his own depending on his upbringing and his experiences. The zeal of young people forced us to take dealing with people seriously. At first, the young man refused to reveal his name because he believed that he had carried out a national duty to his country and had restored his people's history, the history he had heard from his father and the old men of Jarif. He was then forced to become chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council. Matters went back to normal, and the enthusiasm of demonstrations faded as people started examining the faces of the new leaders. There is no doubt that they were also taken aback

by the situation. To them, the underdog was in the right. The number of underdogs grew, and assistance efforts to solve their problems became numerous. An office for complaints was opened and millions of complaints started piling up.

Then 'Abd-al-Nasir came along, standing tall and beaming with pleasure. He sent Haykal to find out what was going on next door after Mu'ammār shattered the border gates and got rid of the enemy's planes which had flown out of Libya to bomb Egypt during the 1967 war. Haykal went back to Egypt with an informative news report about the revolution in Libya.

It occurred to 'Abd-al-Nasir then that he should help these truthful, Bedouin people. So he sent experts, professors and physicians to Libya. The Libyans were delighted because they were being treated by Egyptian physicians who, like them, ate onions and spoke their language. Then the two heroes, 'Abd-al-Nasir and Mu'ammār, met, but each man came with the history of his own way and environment. 'Abd-al-Nasir's people were different from Mu'ammār's people even though the people in both nations are Arabs. When the two men met, 'Abd-al-Nasir made the man's acquaintance; he talked with him; and he saw in him what Haykal and others had failed to see. 'Abd-al-Nasir was delighted because he had found in Mu'ammār a nationalist who could carry the burden of the stage with him. In Benghazi 'Abd-al-Nasir told the masses, as though he were a prophet prophesying the future, "I leave you now with this word: my brother and my friend, Mu'ammār al-Qadhdhafi, is the guardian of Arab nationalism." At that hour 'Abd-al-Nasir was relieved, and he would have even welcomed death because someone else was there to carry the flame which would illuminate the gloomy map of the Arab world. The masses in Benghazi applauded 'Abd-al-Nasir although they did not get the meaning of what he had said.

Mu'ammār al-Qadhdhafi then used to look at the heavy burden which the great 'Abd-al-Nasir carried. 'Abd-al-Nasir carried the Arab nation on his shoulders: he carried its sins as well as its virtues. When Mu'ammār saw that, beads of perspiration appeared on his forehead, and he felt how heavy that burden was. He saw the possibilities for Egypt, the Egyptians, and the truthful Libyans to translate Arab unity, which he loved, into action. Mu'ammār was optimistic, but destiny wanted to place the burden on Mu'ammār. That was his destiny. Destiny did not choose him for another task, and it did not choose another person to carry this burden. It did not choose another task and another person with major circumstances of struggle that are defined.

Then 'Abd-al-Nasir died. The Arab defeat killed him; the people who had sung for him failed him. Military leaders failed him: they had shown him an exercise with live ammunition, the kind that happens in American movies. The man believed them, and he laid down his challenge. He roared and held his head high. Then came the 1967 defeat, not the 1967 setback, and after that the Palestinian incidents in Jordan. With a heavy heart 'Abd-al-Nasir joined hands with Mu'ammār and with the rest of the rulers. Mu'ammār was carrying his weapon because he believed in the proverb which says that it is all right to keep the company of wolves provided one is armed. Mu'ammār would look at the rulers and see something other than what the others saw. Because of his age and magnanimous nature, the great 'Abd-al-Nasir used to cover up the nation's open wounds which were bleeding profusely. Although he too was hurt and bleeding, we did not see

him bleed and we applauded him. The crisis was over, and he returned to Cairo to bid the rulers farewell. He felt tired, but he was pleased because he had solved a problem that would have destroyed the entire nation. He told his escort that he would sleep soundly after this mission was over. 'Abd-al-Nasir went back to Cairo; he talked with his wife, Fathiyah, and he examined for the first time the furniture in his home. He stared for the first time at the ceiling, the ceiling of the room. He believed that he had turned back the 1967 defeat and that he had treated and dressed the Palestinian injury.

He left us and passed away quietly. Everyone was shocked. Those in his house rushed to open his safe to find out what his secrets were. They had forgotten that he had held his future ambitions close to his heart and that there was a guardian for Arab nationalism and for the Arab nation. He was not interested in who would rule Egypt after him because he believed that, despite the American and colonialist siege that had been set up around him and his revolution, the people had become aware of the revolution's progress. However, destiny had much in store for the nation and for Egypt. With a grieving heart Mu'ammār eulogized 'Abd-al-Nasir with words that drove away despair and reassured sincere Arabs. He flew to Cairo where he joined some people in nominating al-Sadat a candidate for the presidency. In fact, Mu'ammār's method in persuading others was abrupt because he feared the Egyptian Revolution could be stolen. He knew that al-Sadat was 'Abd-al-Nasir's companion. But the chasm in Egypt between 'Abd-al-Nasir and al-Sadat was unknown to us in Libya then. 'Abd-al-Nasir's ideas had been prevalent all over Egypt and in some parts of the Arab nation. But the masks fell as the days went by. And you know what happened when we got to Camp David. We did not believe that Egypt's grandeur would come to that! Mu'ammār made his challenge, and he spoke clearly and unequivocally with al-Sadat and his Palestinian colleagues as well. He spoke a Bedouin truth, and his words were as pure as camels' milk. Mu'ammār did not know that the people he was talking to were listening devices, transmitting information to the White House and to Israel's Knesset.

Mu'ammār remembered the Libyan people, truly a small nation, and he tried to gather them together despite their contradictions. But his thoughts went beyond the 2 million Libyans, so he let his colleagues manage matters under his guidance while he considered the map. The Libyan people needed another nation to make their impact continue and endure. He approached Tunisia, Syria, Algeria and Morocco with a request for unconditional unity. He offered them leadership, but the leaders of those countries feared the revolutionary sparkle in his eyes because once their own people got that revolutionary sparkle in their eyes, they would see with open eyes like Mu'ammār's, and those rulers would be exposed. So they wavered; and then they fled, seeking assistance from colonialists as well as protection from the appeal of al-Qadhafi's revolution which had become widespread in their countries. All those who subscribed to al-Qadhafi's ideas in their countries were imprisoned.

Let me reiterate: what do we want from Mu'ammār al-Qadhafi? He threw colonialists out; he gave us farms and homes; he bought for us all the weapons we could want; he provided weapons training for the traditional army; and he tried to create an armed nation because he believes that traditional armies are nothing more than a band of men who are skillful in the art of war and killing to occupy territory or raise a flag over the enemy's territory in order to

secure a place in history for their units and win the medals they can wear. Al-Qadhdhafi asked people to arm themselves, and we offered our efforts as conscripts: we became army recruits and then served with the republican and revolutionary guard. Guns proliferated, and Mu'ammarr no longer thought too much about us because he had turned over to us the power, the revolution and the weapons. He let us fight with each other and react to each other, and we often differed. We fought each other, and we would no longer leave him to his thoughts for too long before running to him to complain or defame each other. Each one of us fought in his own way.

While this infighting was going on, the White House had received confirmation that Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi's appeal was strong. The White House tried everything to interfere, and then it was decided that al-Qadhdhafi was to be killed and his home bombed. Mu'ammarr stood calmly while some of us fled and others thought about burning the revolutionary papers they had bragged about. It was the angels, however, that turned out to be the weapon which protected Mu'ammarr. The historic conspiracy failed. For the first time in history senior commanders and situation room staff officers had met to plan that conspiracy, utilizing all the equipment, technology and information they could muster. The whole world had mobilized its armies, and orders had been issued to bomb al-Qadhdhafi to silence him and extinguish his appeal. But al-Qadhdhafi shook off the dust after the raid and walked out into the street to ask the people how they were and how their children were. He wanted to reassure air defense forces that the enemy was using modern science. But we disagreed and we fought among ourselves. Then we tried to outdo each other by offering to provide him shelter even as our hearts were preoccupied with women's emotions and matters of daily living. Mu'ammarr left his home, a witness to international terrorism to illustrate that the world and its power had stood against a simple, sensitive man, an author, a man of letters, a reader, a husband and a father like other men. He walked around in our midst, and he refused to settle down. We outmaneuvered each other in our efforts to welcome him because his presence in our midst made everything that we needed from the state's agencies available to us. But he was thinking in a different way; he was reconciling our differences: correcting some of us and forgiving others. Did he not teach us freedom?

Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi gave us freedom, but we did not know how to use it. He gave us wealth, but we did not know how to use it. Wealth had been distributed among the few in an alarming manner, and the masses suffered because there were no goods in the market. Some people expressed their discontent and blamed all that on Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi. He assumed responsibility for all that, but he did not despair even though he tried to show us his displeasure with our conduct, our mistakes and even our applications of the ideas in his theory. So what is it that we want from Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi?

It behooves us to be brave and to take a good look at ourselves. We should cancel all the files we had in the past about each other and resolve truly to die. We should assemble together some place and invite Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi to this gathering where we would deliver our wills to him. We should speak calmly and say, "We tried, Mu'ammarr, and we made mistakes. What do you want from us now?" We should give him the freedom to respond, that is, if we have the courage and the revolutionary honesty to do this, and if we get rid of our complexes. Wouldn't this be an adequate title for a newspaper article: "What does Mu'ammarr

al-Qadhdhafi want from us?" And when he makes his request known, we will then know who is a revolutionary, who is a shrewd political animal, and who is a coward.

Will the leader be kind enough to accept our invitation and let us hope that this nation is still in good condition so that 'Abd-al-Nasir can rest in peace because he is confident that the Arab nation is in good hands with Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi as its guardian?

We are not journalists or uninvited guests. We are the descendants of pre-Islamic days, the descendants of Salah al-Din, 'Umar al-Mukhtar and al-Sa'idi al-Tabuli. We are quite capable of standing tall and examining ourselves with a critical eye. We can get rid of our flaws, even if we had to use weapons to do it. We are assembled together in a new spirit, offering al-Qadhdhafi our total willingness [to do his bidding] and awaiting orders.

Forgive me for being long winded, but freedom will come when rhetoric and bullets join forces. That is the slogan we rejected recently at the gulf of challenge where poets and men of letters met and assembled.

There is no sequel to this subject, nor is there anything more to be said.

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NATION CHIDED FOR TRIVIAL PURSUITS

Tripoli AL-JAMAHIRIYAH in Arabic 1 May 87 p 5

[Article by Sayyid Muhammad Qadhdhaf-al-Dam: "The Topic Revisited!"]

[Text] Many happy returns: the month of Ramadan is here once again. Once again our stomachs are full and our minds blank as we stretch and yawn like cats, neigh like horses and rant and rave at our wives like lions because they forgot to add salt to the food. But we forgot to rant and rave about Jerusalem and about Ceuta and Mellila. What bravery! During the month of Ramadan nobody talks to us because we are fasting. It were as though we were the only ones who had to fast.

Many happy returns: it is the month of Ramadan.

It is the season for carriage rides, idle talk, misdeeds and inaction. Like a mustard seed Ramadan came in the summer, suddenly and unannounced. Let's hope that Ramadan, like the neighborhood herald who awakens worshipers before dawn to take their last meal before daybreak during that month, will wake us up from the deep slumber we slipped into as the world moves on at a very fast pace. The prophet said, "Fast and become healthy." But whether the prophet said that or not, when we fast we either become sick or we feign illness. We use flimsy excuses for not getting things done: first of all, we cannot talk with the secretariats because we are in Ramadan. Second, they are in a state of transition, and they have not been accustomed to come face to face with Ramadan in Surt, al-Jufrah, and Misratah.

These secretariats used to observe Ramadan in Tripoli. And they are absolutely right: there is no "nasbuli" [meaning unknown] in Surt, nor are there chick-pea farms. There are no fashionable urbanites in Surt; all the people there are Bedouins. The skin of their hands is cracked, and they are all conscripts. They do not care at all where the secretariats are because people do not need them. They have no time for such things. Their problems are clearly defined: they toil on their very small farms; they tend their camels; and they plant and harvest their crops. They care nothing for exit visas and automobiles. The roads there are not fit for driving anyway.

In the gulf of challenge people always brace themselves for an encounter with the enemy who is expected to come from any direction. Even those who had been completely taken by the city and captivated by its young women did not adjust to

Tripoli's climate. This is because al-Shaykh Mubashir is the only preacher they hear in the mosque, at funerals and at weddings. So, many happy returns for the month of Ramadan.

Rumors are everywhere; they are spreading everywhere in our midst, and we are enjoying them. Intellectuals, those who are close to power, and the upwardly mobile in our midst have to say something. And whatever they say, we repeat with pride because it was said about this person or the other.

The month of Ramadan is a holy month. It is a month of fasting and giving some parts of the body a break so they can rehabilitate themselves. It is a month during which the ailing parts of the body can be examined. And yet, when we break the fast after hearing the call to prayer at sunset, our tables are laden with various kinds of dishes which we prepared with care. And Libyan men boast about the dishes their wives offer their guests.

Many happy returns for the month of Ramadan, the month during which you race each other to the market, delighted with your purchase of tea pots which used to be practically given away with the purchase of good tea from the market. But those tea pots disappeared unexpectedly only to be sold on the black market. Let the people rejoice over this great invention which has reappeared in the market.

This month of Ramadan is insane because of the way it treats all people, putting everyone on the planet to the test. During that month sins are revealed by God Almighty despite Satan's attempt to intervene. What is our record, I wonder, for this month of Ramadan?

I do not know what the broadcasting service has prepared for our viewing pleasure during that month. Although I do not blame the new people who inherited the responsibility for the broadcasting service, I concede that we have to tune in to Tunisian and Italian programs, because 'Abd-al-Halim Hafiz and Umm Kulthum are available in Tunisia but not here. Egyptian serials are also banned in our broadcasts, even though we smuggle them into the country as though they were hashish, and all of us watch them. Why don't we get these Egyptian television serials? They have nothing to do with Camp David, and they are not al-Sadat's private property. Some of them, to tell the truth, deal with concepts such as no one owns the land; a home belongs to its occupant; and a child is to be raised by its mother. But we don't care about such things as much as we care about football games and American serials. We may sometimes err and broadcast a song by Fa'idah Kamil, member of Egypt's People's Assembly, who agreed to visit Israel, and we make no comment when such a mistake is made. But can we ask our fellow revolutionaries who took over the media to extend an invitation to 'Adil Imam, to the writer, 'Abd-al-Rahman Shawqi and to al-Shaykh 'Antar, a reader of the Holy Koran? They are not too greedy; to them seeing the Libyan people and having the Libyan people see them would suffice. We lost Egypt, and Egypt has lost us. A taxicab driver told a Libyan citizen there, "When will you come to see us, the Egyptian people? You wouldn't have to visit al-Qubbah Palace and the pyramids, but you would at least come to visit Sulayman Khatir's tomb and say a prayer at his final resting place, and you would pray for 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Khamisi's soul even though he is a communist.

To those who don't know this, recorded programs from Greece and Italy cost much more than Egyptian serials. We are being forced to listen to "Ghalis" [meaning unknown] and to the other shaykh, even though their poetry is not like ours and we do not converse with them in Arabic. Because their dialect has been forced on us, members of our new generation are imitating them, and young people are now conversing in that language. Let me congratulate you for having learned this new language. What is much better, however, is the subject of the topics [that are broadcast]. These are topics which arouse our Arab pride and induce us to seek revenge like our forefathers. And yet, we have not yet sought revenge from Israel.

Many happy returns on the month of Ramadan! We have seen Mu'ammār conduct a dialogue with Si'dah, al-Jalī's daughter. To many people that is inconsequential, but history is being written, and "the leader read history carefully;" the stories he heard were related to him first-hand. When observed, Mu'ammār would be making inquiries about some of those who earned and received medals for their valiant struggle. What then has come over us? Why is this woman being brought after all these years to relate how her father was killed and who killed him? Why is Kasbiyah and her sister telling us about Khalifah al-Zawī, a leader who embarrassed us? And what if he were to be in the company of al-Qardabiyah, al-Marqab, Taqraft, al-Hanī and others? He who sold his country and betrayed his conscience when the Italians were in Libya will not have revolutionary grandchildren. At least, that is what the proverb says.

By hook or by crook we have to go through this month and do our duty. All discussions about everything man does except fasting have to be suspended. Fasting is for me, and I am more worthy of its reward.

If that is true, why then are we looking for those who do not observe the fast in Ramadan? Why are we putting them in the spotlight and serving them the main dish? Fasting in Ramadan means abstinence: abstinence from falsehood, from theft, and from amulets.

Do you agree with me that Ramadan should be a time for contemplation, for self-examination and for serenity? Do you understand what I'm saying? If you do not understand, many happy returns any way. You will be observing Ramadan the same way any creature in a small religious order observes it.

8592
CSO: 4504/240

NATION URGED TO COUPLE WORDS WITH ACTION

Tripoli AL-JAMAHIRIYAH in Arabic 10 Apr 87 p 11

[Article by Hamid Abu Jabirah: "An Urgent Appeal To Organize a Party; an Urgent Appeal for Action"]

[Text] It would not be enough to stop here. It would not be enough to analyze and scrutinize facts in a revolutionary, scientific, and incisive manner. Nor would it be enough to read and re-read more and more articles while living under the same conditions we've been having, only to turn around and make an urgent appeal for the organization of a party. It would not be enough to say these are "strong, characteristic, brave, transitional words," and so on.

That would not be enough because the matter goes beyond reading and understanding. This is a matter which involves a theoretical and an applied approach to the facts which we examined and analyzed.

What caused those conditions to become exposed and brought out in the open is the fact that they are at odds with the revolution.

After we declared rebellion against those conditions, things returned to the way they used to be. Favoritism and nepotism came back; travel abroad with funds in excess of the allocated amounts came back; reactionary bourgeois families are once again climbing the ladder of rank; and "chameleons" [hypocritical characters are back inside and outside [their] haunts. Then, things are back to the way they used to be.

This is what we wrote and what we read to ourselves more than once. We wrote this just as we had written the urgent appeal to organize a party. While some of us wanted the substance of that article dropped, and frail, superficial matters included, there were those who complained about the article and expressed to us their feigned anger with the term, party, even though they themselves are 100 percent partisan.

Those people complained not because they opposed political parties and partisanship in theory, but because they did not support the notion of victory for the revolution's real proprietors and beneficiaries. If those people were to re-read [what we wrote] and examine the situation carefully, they would know that the appeal and what it involves constitutes the basis [for what we are calling for] regardless of anything else. A political party is another question; that has

been made quite clear in the Green Book. No one has to call attention to it or go to the leader to ask him how and why we need an explanation for what the author of the article set forth.

Once again we repeat that a revolutionary position is one and the same thing both in theory and in practice.

Approaching the facts in this manner goes hand in hand with revolutionary depth and revolutionary creativity. Talking publicly about everything which is impeding the revolutionary transformation is primarily an expression of a strong and sturdy position. What is always most important and fundamental in all this, that is, in having a strong position, is action, revolutionary action. We cannot let these issues fizzle out and turn into mere newspaper talk. This is an old theory; with the revolution we managed to move beyond that. Let's say that we would first have to discredit faith in such an old theory by actually taking action. When we call for revolutionary classification, let that process then begin in practice because this is a revolutionary question that is of interest to the revolution and to revolutionaries.

Declaring a revolutionary position means announcing the onset of an action taken to terminate a prevailing situation so it can be evaluated in revolutionary terms. That means evaluating that situation theoretically and in practice with the same ability, the same creativity, the same power, the same self-confidence and the same weapons we use when we fight.

A position is declared when those claiming it as theirs rise to the level of revolutionary action, that is, when that position is translated into action. But none of this would happen spontaneously as we stand by and watch. It is true that revolutionary forces are bound for victory and that the remaining and decaying dregs of reactionaries and the bourgeoisie are not strong enough to stand up to the scientific, revolutionary argument we put forth and fight for. That victory, nevertheless, can only come about with action. And that action will not happen unless we make it happen, just as we make a revolutionary action happen. The revolution's first declaration was a declaration about the onset of action in 1969. That was the moment when great revolutionary action was born. That historic act could have been foiled then had not direct, concrete action been taken against anti-revolutionary forces.

All the classes that exploit people and the colonialist bases which were oppressing this land were resisting the revolution. Although they drew all their weapons against the revolution, it was the strength of the revolutionary position which rebutted all weak excuses and brought about quite a forceful approach to the facts. It was the strength of the revolutionary position that caused this great action to spread out in the real world.

Let us rephrase another question now after this simple reading of material which we had read before. Are the objectives in front of us now clearly defined for directing revolutionary action? To put it another way: is it clear to us now who are the real proprietors and beneficiaries of the revolution and who are its enemies?

I do not think that anyone will delay in answering this question. Certainly, everything is clear: what is evil is clear, and what is virtuous is also clear.

Did we not expose reactionaries, the bourgeoisie and the remaining pockets and lackeys of exploitation? We did expose them, and we identified each one of them. We've even identified those "chameleons" behind their revolutionary masks. These individuals have now been hurt by those who allied themselves fully and completely with al-Hajj 'Umar al-Tajir [corrupt merchant] who mistakenly and ignorantly believed that making an effort to improve services and raise the standard of service would be a return to exploitative trade and a return to the stores of the hateful past.

Accordingly, therefore, and according to this latest version and on its basis, everything appears to be clear.

That same classification or sorting which so far we have not been able to do is that which we are proclaiming as a slogan and an idea we are holding on to: it does exist in theory. The sorting process is spontaneous, and those who are interested in the revolution and in its glorious victory are well-known. They are the revolution's natural allies. Those who are not are well known.

The revolution is this great and glorious historical action whose ideas rocked the entire world. Those ideas dealt with all problems which have plagued the human race throughout the ages. This action, which is strong by nature, is one in front of which all idols and all weak, frail fronts collapse. Those who fail to rise to the level of such action are undoubtedly finished. They cannot go on even if they were to depend on us inside or outside homes. We know quite well that revolutionary centers [mathabas] are not hospices where the incapable can find refuge. They represent the power of the revolution and its action which is growing and getting bigger every day. Beyond all that and after realizing this, will we defer action, now that these facts about who does and does not adhere closely to the revolutionary reality of the masses have been boldly disclosed in more than one column and article? Will we postpone the hour of decision?

8592

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INTERVIEW WITH MINISTER OF FINANCE MOHAMED BERRADA

Casablanca LE MESSAGE DE LA NATION in French 8 Apr 87 pp 12-17

[Interview with Finance Minister Mohamed Berrada by Bahia Amrani: "Our Partners Confirm Their Confidence in Our Policy and Our Economy."]

[Text] LE MESSAGE DE LA NATION: Minister, you did a financial marathon which began in London last December and which ended in Paris in mid-March. You secured the rescheduling of Morocco's debt. In what way is that important to the country's finances?

Mohamed Berrada: To understand the role of the various negotiations we conducted in December 1986 and until March, one must place them in the overall context, the context of public finances.

As a matter of fact, once the Appropriation Law had been passed and once the balance of payments for FY1987 had been established, we also had to see to the mobilization of domestic and foreign funds. The latter had to permit the financing of the operating and investment expenditures provided for in the Appropriation Law as well as the gap provided in the balance of payments. For 1987, this gap had been estimated at around \$1.950 billion.

The financing of the balance of payments was to permit the reduction of our foreign arrears. Moreover, by the end of 1987, we expect the restoration of our exchange reserves in an amount of about 93 million SDR (almost \$120 million).

[Question] Is this currently possible?

[Answer] Yes, of course on the condition that the domestic funds provided for in the Appropriation Law are actually collected, that is to say, the tax revenues and the money coming from domestic credit. On the other hand, we must stay within the expenditures estimated for the year 1987. The materialization of all of these various estimates would make it possible to reduce the overall treasury deficit to 5.6 percent of the GDP, such as it emerges from the Appropriation Law. Looking at foreign finances, this situation would enable us almost to achieve a balance in the current balance of payments account.

"The Problem Was to Try to Find 1.950 Billion"

[Question] The first condition thus was to find the 1.950 billion representing the financing gap in the balance of payments for the year 1987.

[Answer] Yes, the problem was to find that 1.950 billion. Traditionally, one resorts to new credits; these are loans--new money, in other words--which are sought from international financial institutions, banks, and governments. But the borrowing possibilities are becoming increasingly rare in view of the decline in the flow of capital toward the developing countries as observed over these past years.

The second possibility is to request rescheduling of what is normally due during the course of the year.

[Question] What rescheduling is involved here, Minister?

[Answer] To understand what kind of rescheduling is involved here, we must in an overall fashion recall the components of our foreign debt. On the basis of the outstanding debt as of the end of December 1986, about \$8 billion are of a public nature, that is to say, with respect to the members of the Club of Paris and other states. The debt owed the private international commercial banks comes to close to \$3.4 billion. That includes about 250 banks within the Club of London.

As for the international financial institutions, including the IMF, the World Bank, the FDA, the ADB, the IDB, and others, we owe them about \$3.2 billion. The total debt thus comes to almost \$14.6 billion. It must be pointed out that debts owed the Club of Paris and the Club of London, as well as those owed the Arab Governments, can be rescheduled. The same is not true of debts contracted with international financial institutions.

Thus we see that the advantage of the Moroccan debt structure resides in the fact that it is to a great extent contracted with governments.

[Question] What does this advantage consist of?

[Answer] The debt owed the public creditors (Club of Paris and other governments) is characterized by repayment over a long period of time that can extend to as much as 30 years, with relatively low interest rates that can drop to as much as 2 percent; it is thus in the nature of a grant.

The debt owed the international financial institutions is also a long-term debt. As for the debt owed the Club of London, it is essentially medium-term; but its share in our foreign debt is relatively small. It does not exceed 25 percent.

[Question] Is that figure of \$14.6 billion a lot of debt for Morocco?

[Answer] I do not think so. This figure may look big to you at first sight. But, when contemplated in terms of absolute value, it is not very significant. To get the correct idea of the debt, one must study its structure and

then relate its volume to certain extremely carefully chosen indicators. We have just seen that most of the Moroccan debt is in the nature of a grant, that is to say, it can be repaid over a long period of time and at relatively low interest rates with appropriate grace periods. This is not true in the case of other indebted countries where 80 percent of the foreign debt is often contracted with commercial banks.

"The Official GDP Has Been Underestimated"

One can get a correct idea of a debt also by relating it to certain economic indicators. Often, one selects the GDP. Morocco's foreign debt, when related to the GDP, gives us a ratio of about 100 percent. Here again, this ratio may look relatively high to you at first sight, when compared to the ratio in other borrower countries. But let us be careful when it comes to national totals; international comparisons must be made with much caution!

[Question] How?

[Answer] While the numerator--with the debt expressed in dollars--has a certain foreign objectivity, the same is not true of the denominator, the GDP. The value of the GDP depends on the national accounting system adopted in each country, on the method of evaluation, on its domestic price structure, and on its exchange rate policy. Let us take two countries with equivalent output figures in terms of quantities. The country which has low domestic price levels and high exchange rates will necessarily have an output that is higher in value, when expressed in dollars, for example. By virtue of that fact, its borrowing ratio will be lower. Now, we know that many indebted countries have relatively high price levels with less realistic exchange rates. That is not true of Morocco.

On the other hand, the GDP is a total figure which is derived from statistical assessments. On the national scale, it is agreed that a portion of the output is not picked up in the census. If you will, we can call that the underground economy or the informal economy. Because of that, the official GDP is underestimated and the borrowing ratio appears to be overestimated.

[Question] Minister, let us come back to the financing gap. How did you finance it?

[Answer] The first source is rescheduling with the Arab governments involving an amount of \$480 million for FY1987.

The second financing source is the rescheduling secured from the Club of London.

As a matter of fact, Morocco negotiated the second rescheduling in December 1986 with the Club of London. The first one took place in 1985 and involved the amounts due in 1983 and 1984. We might remember here that the rescheduling negotiated in 1986 involved the amounts due for 4 years (1985, 1986, 1987, and 1988) and that it involved \$1.8 billion, both long-term and medium-term.

The conditions obtained in the context of these negotiations were as follows:

Duration: 10 years with 5 years of grace;

Rate: A margin called "spread" of 1 and 3/16 percent per year above the LIBOR and a refinancing commission of 0.5 percent.

So, the amount involving exclusively the year 1987 is \$620 million. Next, the third source for financing the gap was obtained from the Club of Paris on 6 March 1987. On that date precisely we rescheduled--over a period of 10 years with 5 years of grace--the amounts that were going to fall due between 1 March 1987 and 30 June 1988. The rescheduled amount came to \$900 million, including \$300 million coming from the rescheduling charges for the last two agreements. These results will give us a breather.

[Question] In the end, then, what are the rescheduling gains obtained for FY1987?

[Answer] To recapitulate, the financing sources obtained for 1987 in the form of rescheduling gains to \$480 million from the Arab countries; \$650 million from the Club of Paris; and \$620 million from the Club of London.

"We had to show that Morocco's economic situation was improving."

To this we must add the releases we got during this year. The standby agreement which we have with the IMF involves around \$200 million. This gives us a total of \$1.90 billion. This represents the coverage of the financing gap which had been provided in our balance of payments for FY1987. This rather complicated setup, which was put together progressively with our public and private partners, will permit the total coverage of the gap.

Consequently, as the domestic resources and expenditures provided for the in budget are complied with, we think that the foreign resources that were mobilized will enable us to carry out the Appropriation Law under the best conditions.

These results, which were obtained in terms of the rescheduling of our debt, will enable us to benefit from a rest period during which we will be able to come up with an adequate dosage between the adjustment and the revival of economic activities.

[Question] What are the arguments developed by your delegation to obtain these results?

[Answer] We have to show that Morocco's economic situation was improving and that the structural adjustment measures, undertaken since 1983, are beginning to bear fruit and that, consequently, their continuation in medium-range terms necessarily requires a certain dose of recovery.

[Question] Minister, what are the economic results recorded by Morocco?

[Answer] We can summarize them as follows:

A growth rate, in 1986, of 5.7 percent whereas it had been 4.3 percent in 1985;

A rate of inflation of about 8 percent in 1986, whereas it had been 12.5 percent in 1981;

A considerable reduction in the total treasury deficit which dropped from 12.6 percent of the GDP in 1982 to 6.4 percent in 1986 and we expect to reduce it further to 5.6 percent in 1987;

A considerable reduction in the current deficit of the balance of payments, declining from 13 percent of the GDP in 1982 to 2 percent in 1986 and we expect to achieve just about a balance in 1987.

All of these arguments show the firm determination of the government of His Majesty the King to reduce the imbalances; they also enable us to confirm and strengthen the confidence of our partners in our policy and in the potential of our economy.

[Question] What was all this due to?

[Answer] First of all, it was due to the improvement in the international environment, petroleum, interest rates, the drop of the dollar, although phosphate prices remain low. In 1986, earnings from phosphates and derivatives declined about 1.1 billion Dh [Dirhams] when compared to 1985. This was also due to the positive effect of major agricultural harvests, especially cereal crops; finally, it was due to the policy of adjustment and sector reforms which in particular affected the foreign trade sector. The reduction in imports, as well as the strengthening of incentives and encouragement for the promotion of exports, of tourism, and of the transfer of the earnings of Moroccan workers abroad also benefitted the Moroccan economy.

[Question] Minister, can you give us some statistics?

[Answer] Transfers by Moroccan workers abroad increased 22 percent compared to 1985, reaching a figure of about 13 billion Dh, in other words, about \$1.5 billion. Tourist receipts were about 6.5 billion Dh, thus showing a growth rate of 11 percent compared to 1985, after an increase of 45 percent in 1985 as compared to 1984. We also had a very high growth rate in manufactured products exports in 1986. The growth rate recorded here is 27 percent compared to 1985. These products account for almost 22 percent of the total Moroccan exports. These are extremely important results which reflect the profound changes in our production structures and which, by the same token, constitute a result of the economic policy pursued since 1983. All of these positive results together, such as they were obtained at the economic and financial levels, were achieved as a result of the improvement of our economic structures, especially due to the process which was launched in 1983, a process of liberalization, of increasing efficiency on the part of the production establishment, as well as the competitive capacity of Moroccan products.

[Question] Minister, did you say something about a dosage between adjustment and economic growth?

[Answer] It seems to me that healthy growth is the best way to continue our adjustment efforts. Hence, a dosage is absolutely required between adjustment measures and growth measures.

"Morocco Is at a Stage Where Economic Development Cannot Be Promoted Only by the State."

[Question] How are you planning to administer this dosage?

[Answer] The dosage must be sought through growth. It thus appears necessary to me to revive investments within the limits of our financial possibilities and to provide dynamic impetus for private initiative. Morocco is at a stage in which economic development cannot be given impetus only by the State. All partners--the State, the local communities, public enterprises and the private sector--must contribute to the upswing of the country's economy. We will thus make sure to create a synergy between these different agents. In our opinion, this growth policy is aimed at promoting employment. This must be done to avoid the pitfalls of an adjustment without an improvement in the population's living standard. We will therefore continue our financial recovery policy based on the reduction in the overall treasury deficit and the equilibrium of current transactions in the balance of payments while pursuing a minimum public investment program.

[Question] How do you visualized the financing of these minimum public investments?

[Answer] The consultative group, which met last March, will help mobilize resources to finance these investments.

[Question] Can you tell us something about this consultative group?

[Answer] Yes, these are informal meetings organized by the World Bank. That takes up to 2-3 days of discussions and negotiations with different partners and friendly countries.

During this meeting which was held between 10 and 12 March 1987, 11 countries were present, including France, the United States, Germany, Japan, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Canada, and 15 international financial institutions, the IMF, the Arab Monetary Fund, the African Development Bank, and the various Arab development funds.

During those days, we--Planning Minister Rachidi Ghazouani and myself--presented two reports. Mine was concentrated on the results of the adjustment and economic reorganization policy registered until the end of 1986. Next it was necessary to present Morocco's economic and financial prospects. It was necessary to justify our demand for an exceptional and highly concessional envelope of 100 million CDR.

"Our Objective Above All Is to Finish the Projects Now in Progress."

The planning minister presented a report on sector strategies and on the prospects of the national economy in medium-range terms. It is evident that the success of these meetings resides in the way in which the positive results recorded in our economy are brought out.

[Question] Minister, why must we have an envelope of grant-based resources?

[Answer] This is necessary so as not to hamper the effects of the rescheduling we secured. We wanted to reschedule in order to reduce the burden of repayments. There was therefore no question whatsoever that these new funds should further add to the burden of our debt.

Our objective above all is to finish projects in progress. The medium-term prospects will be clarified after the adoption of the 1988-1992 Plan whose general guidelines are established on the basis of the High Directives of His Majesty King Hassan II.

[Question] Minister, which are the sectors that you judge to have priority and that can play a growth-promoting role?

[Answer] Quite logically, these are the sectors that have the greatest capacity for integration within the national economy. This involves primarily agriculture. Although its contribution to the GDP is only 15 percent, it does involve almost 60 percent of the population. The policy of building dams, one dam per year, as announced by His Majesty the King, is the fundamental element in our long-term development policy.

A dam, as a matter of fact, represents a source of life for agriculture, for towns and villages. But it also contributes to the upswing of factories by supplying electric energy at lower cost. We must not forget that Morocco is an oil importing country.

Second, there are the small-scale and medium-scale industries. The liberal orientation of Morocco's economy, the spirit of competition, and the existence of an industrial fabric give the PME [small and medium-sized businesses] much room for spreading out.

Tourism is also playing a role in our economy's upswing.

[Question] Why tourism?

[Answer] First of all, because of its effects on the building industries. Now, you know how strongly this branch is integrated into the country's economy. Besides, the tourist, a real "homo economicus" [Economic Man], is a consumer of Moroccan products. Finally, it strengthens our foreign exchange receipts which are elements that are necessary to finance our equipment imports.

"On Orders from His Majesty the King, We Created a Special Account in Which We Put \$2 Billion."

[Question] Agriculture, PME, tourism--are there other sectors to be promoted?

[Answer] Indeed, all sectors play a role--each in its own way--in our economy's upswing. There is a sector which has a tremendous development potential and to which considerable reorganization and financing efforts are being devoted. That is the fishing sector! Along with ocean fishing, which in a general fashion needs large amounts of capital, there is coastal fishing which has integration characteristics and potentials that are favorable to the country's economy.

It uses boats made in Morocco, it employs domestic labor, and, in a supplementary fashion, it makes it possible to combine agricultural and livestock activities with fishing activities, thus promoting the upswing of coastal villages.

Coastal fishing contributes almost two-thirds to the output of this sector. By virtue of this fact, the Ministry of Fishing and of the Merchant Marine--which, by the way, launched a dynamic plan for the overall development of this sector--assigns particular importance to coastal fishing.

[Question] Thank you, Minister, for all of these statements. But, to conclude, I would--if you would allow me--like to ask you a question that is completely separate from the subject, a question that is to be found at the dividing line between your bailiwick and ours: The financing of the press. Can you tell us where the 2 billion granted the national press are?

[Answer] Indeed, to strengthen the principle of the dialogue and freedom of expression, which are decisive elements in any real democracy, His Majesty the King has decided to grant the press of the political parties and the labor unions an allocation of 2 billion to be included in the budget. On orders from His Majesty the King we created a special account in which we put this amount; it will be allocated shortly.

[Question] Thank you, Minister.

5058

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PARLIAMENT ATTENDANCE ISSUE EXAMINED

Casablanca LE MESSAGE DE LA NATION in French 29 Apr 87 p 23

[Article by M. Sehim: "Absenteeism in Parliament"]

[Text] The resumption of the parliamentary session in April again brought out the problems of absenteeism among our deputies. Everybody has his own comments on this subject, some to criticize our representatives in general terms--particularly those of the current majority--while the others go after parliamentary work organization. Should we perhaps go further?

We must first of all begin with that institutional observation which we get from comparative parliamentary law: Absenteeism is not inherent in Morocco alone; it is a fact of life in all parliaments of the liberal democracies. We know only too well that the totalitarian democracies of the countries of the East and a certain number of countries governed by a single party follow other principles of organization of political society which do not precisely constitute a reference model.

"Specificities"

So, here are the facts: For various reasons, the deputies cannot be credited with total assiduousness. The top absenteeism award in Europe goes to the Italian members of parliament; but it would be a big mistake to believe that the "soundness" of a democratic system is directly related to the parliamentary attendance rate. Although this remark must be made in passing, it must not serve as an excuse to absolve our deputies. There are other reasons in this respect which probable better explain the "specificities" of Moroccan parliamentary absenteeism.

First of all, the nature of parliamentary delegations and the forms of their organizational affiliation with the parties are hardly negligible. Parliamentary routine--in Morocco as elsewhere--often bears witness to this tendential law: Other things being equal, absenteeism is greater in groups connected with moderate parties, above all if they constitute the majority. In this same sense, it is known that the deputies of the progressive parties--whether or not they are in the opposition--participate much more in parliamentary activities. The reason for this is simple: For this first category of members, the parliamentary institution is one "fighting front"

among others where one must give maximum voice to one's own theses and present them as the only alternative to the current economic and social crisis.

A Feeling of "The Bets Are Already Down"

Second, it must be pointed out that the conditions of majority parliamentarianism--such as it has been practiced since October 1984--do not help maintain the assiduousness of our members of parliament at an acceptable rate. Regardless of whether this happens on the occasion of the budget debate or bills introduced by it, the administration generally does not accept amendments; and it is even less inclined in this respect when those amendments come from parliamentary opposition groups. So, the dominant feeling which springs from that is that "the bets are already down" in advance and that it does no good to try to perform one's function as deputy--as member of an institution of deliberation, legislation, and control--the moment one runs into a permanent "nyet." What good does it do, then, to go to the Chamber of Representatives if one has no real say.

Finally, one might ask oneself whether, after all, the organizational of parliamentary work does not call for some corrections. Why not revise that sacrosanct rule of the personal vote of the deputies and why not provide, as in certain countries, for a vote by delegations on technical questions that do not require the constant presence of rank-and-file deputies. On the other hand, what would prevent the list of deputies with a particularly long record of absenteeism from being published. Is not the punishment of publicity--and later--the punishment administered by the voters--the strongest deterrent?

5058

CSO: 4519/114

EDITORIAL CITES LACK OF MOMENTUM IN EDUCATION REFORM PLAN

Casablanca LE MESSAGE DE LA NATION in French 8 Apr 87 p 21

[Article by Mustapha Sehim: "Education Reform Busted?"]

[Text] The paper on this subject says it rather well: There are two forms of education; one of them is accomplished through the accumulation of knowledge and the continuous transmission of scholarship; the other one involves learning through shock treatment. Now, it looks as though the continuation of the status quo for the time being is the only policy in our higher education system.

Still, the reform approach is dominant. There has been talk of education reform for many years, at least 7, in conferences, in the general policy discussions of the administrations that have been following each other and even in the position statements of the political parties. But we must say that, apart from the "creeping reform" carried out by means of small changes in the conditions under which the elementary, primary, and secondary cycles take place, what remains constant and immovable is indeed the pursuit of outdated--and therefore decried--policies and accommodation with what happens to be in place.

Put To Sleep

The national commission established during the summer of 1979, at the end of the Ifrane conference, was never really able to function. Its fate was sealed the moment parties such as the PI and the USFP [Socialist Union of Popular Forces]--the first of these being the party in power--refused to back reform measures that were indispensable but that were also considered unpopular. Since then, the government put this reform to sleep, undoubtedly thinking that it was better to preserve governmental stability at the time and the process of consensus which began to emerge at Ifrane, rather than to take the risk of making everybody dissatisfied.

In His opening address to last October's session of parliament, the Sovereign restated this problem and said that a national commission was going to be established to tackle this immense task. There has been no new element in this field after 6 months although one was certainly entitled to think that the new administration would express some interest in this subject,

considering the fact that the former national education minister was promoted to prime minister and that, by virtue of this fact, he has more elbow room than in the past.

Everything is happening as if the constant call for reform practically had only an "ideological" function. Shaking up our higher education system and adapting it to the demands of modern society and the urgent needs of economic growth--that is something which everybody agrees on. But we are still lacking the proper political determination to express all these professions of faith in concrete terms. As for the government, the concern appeared to be something like this: Promote an area of consensus on so "sensitive" an issue which would get all of the component parts of the political chessboard together. But at the same time, share with these same components the costs in terms of unpopularity which are inevitably tied to such an undertaking, unless one confines oneself to simply "replastering" the facade.

"Current Deadlock"

On the opposition side, this time, they are undoubtedly aware of the current crisis among the Moroccan universities and the profound questions that touch their status within the economy and society. But one would also like to go further and push any possible national reflection toward basic problems: The regional setup of the university system, a real inventory of national needs, an evaluation of the educational capacities and of the university systems in place (institutes, colleges, universities), not forgetting--something which is still hidden in the official approach--the outstanding function of the university in scientific and technological research. In another way--not without reason--what is at stake here is the in-depth examination of the ways and means of any government policy which persisted in pursuing certain choices that have led to the current deadlock.

The current easy-going attitude can cause the decision-makers only to make waves and--as in the past--to try to gain time, especially regarding what has to be done anyway. But let no one be mistaken: The structural unemployment of thousands of graduates, the rigidity of current structures, the crisis of confidence among teachers and tens of thousands of students who are wondering about the future of the universities and the ways in which they can get into the labor market--these are as many significant indicators of a deadlocked society. Do we have to wait for the shock to get down to brass tacks in the end?

5058

CSO: 4519/114

CAIRO EXHIBIT TO FEATURE COUNTRY'S PROGRESS

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 22 May 87 p 58

[Article: "A City of Towns On the Fairgrounds"]

[Text] At the Cairo fairgrounds, final preparations are in full swing on the Saudi Arabian exhibit, "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Yesterday and Today," which Governor of Riyadh Province Prince Salman bin 'Abd-al-'Aziz will open on 17 July 1987. Cairo will be the fourth world capital, after Germany, London and Paris, and the first Arab capital to host this exhibit, which accurately mirrors the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's progress and development over the past few years. This progress has been considered one of the marvels of all time, and some people even feel that by virtue of God's help and the efforts of the government of the Servant of the Holy Places and his faithful Crown Prince, Saudi Arabia has become the capital of the Twentieth Century for the Third World.

AL-HAWADITH met with Diplomat Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Sudayri, secretary for political and information affairs at the Saudi interests section in Cairo, to discuss the preparations which have been going on for weeks in order to set up the exhibit properly, the story behind why it is being set up in Cairo, and its exhibits and models of Saudi life in the recent past and the present.

The secretary said, "This exhibition, "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Yesterday and Today," is not a trade fair, but a unique cultural exhibition giving a true picture of Saudi Arabia's past and present experiences all at once. The idea of setting up this exhibit in Cairo first began when Governor of Riyadh Province His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin 'Abd-al-'Aziz met with President Husni Mubarak during his recent official visit to Paris, which coincided with the third Saudi exhibit there. When it was suggested at the al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah Coffeehouse that the exhibit be shown in Cairo, the welcome was indescribable throughout the Arab Republic of Egypt. After the Paris fair, Riyadh City Secretary Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Na'im visited Egypt and met with officials involved in the exhibition. Our brothers in Egypt provided all the necessary facilities for such an event, and most important of all, offered as a gift the grounds on which the exhibit, which will last 20 days and will be open free of charge to everyone, would be set up."

He added, "There is no doubt that Cairo is a crossroads for all nationalities, and is distinguished by its important strategic location and its proximity to Europe and Asia, as well as being the spearhead of Africa. These were the reasons why Cairo was chosen to be the first Arab capital--and the fourth world capital--in which this exhibit will be set up. Therefore, we expect many more visitors will visit the fair in Cairo than visited the earlier exhibits, especially since the timing of the exhibit is very good. Many officials have told us that an estimated 750,000 people or maybe a little more visited the Paris exhibit; this same number, or more, will visit the Cairo exhibit each day.

Referring to the various models showing life in Saudi Arabia yesterday and today, Political and Information Affairs Secretary Ahmad al-Sudayri said, "The exhibition will begin with the past, with numerous pictures and models of what Saudi Arabia was like more than 20 years ago. Then we will turn to the other side, what Saudi Arabia is like now and the accomplishments it has achieved which have made it, in the eyes of many learned people, the capital of the Twentieth Century for the countries of the Third World. Servant of the Holy Places King Fahd bin 'Abd-al-'Aziz, Crown Prince 'Abdallah bin 'Abd-al-'Aziz, and all the Kingdom's officials wanted this God-given resource to achieve many impossible things. Those who look at life as it was 20 years ago and how it is today will not be able to believe the Kingdom's tremendous accomplishments in such a short time. The government of the Servant of the Holy Places made the best possible use of this resource in order to stimulate all aspects of Saudi life, from education, health and housing to utilities, services and the like."

"The exhibit has models of the Holy Places, the Prophet's Mosque, and the Ka'abah, and also depicts two recently-built cities, Yanbu' and Jubayl, which the government intended as citadels of the petrochemical industry for us to make use of either now or in the future in order to achieve self-reliance.

"The exhibition also has a special wing on space sciences presenting the visit to outer space by the first Arab astronaut, His Royal Highness Prince Sultan bin Salman bin 'Abd-al-'Aziz. This wing will have all the personal possessions he took on his space trip, as well as some rare rocks. During the course of the exhibition, the 'Astronaut Prince' will offer several seminars, meetings and lectures on his historic trip of which Arabs and Muslims can be proud, and several other officials will also deliver lectures.

"The exhibit will also accurately depict the industrial and agricultural achievements by which the Kingdom has been able to turn the desert into a green garden. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has now become totally self-reliant from the standpoint of food, and is exporting many agricultural products, particularly wheat, to many other countries."

AL-HAWADITH asked about the stages of construction involved in preparing for this exhibit in Cairo. The secretary replied, "The Cairo fairgrounds were handed over and preparations and construction began. Management and technical work is still under way, and exhibit officials are constantly sending delegations between Cairo and Riyadh. The preparations and construction activities are being supervised by Saudi Ambassador As'ad Abu-al-Nasir, and a

permanent committee consisting of Deputy Riyadh Governor for Security Affairs Muhammad al-Qaybi, Deputy Riyadh Secretary Engr Musa'id al-'Anqari, Assistant Deputy Information Minister Dr Shihab Jamjum, Engr Ahmad al-Tuwayjari from the Riyadh City Secretariat, Prince Salman's Office Director 'Assaf Abu-Ithnayn, and Col Darwish Faqiha is constantly shuttling between Riyadh and Cairo. This committee is chaired by Riyadh City Secretary Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Na'im, and all the members are under the supervision of Governor of Riyadh Province His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin 'Abd-al-'Aziz."

When AL-HAWADITH asked whether after Cairo the exhibit would go to other capital cities, the secretary replied, "As far as I know, the exhibit "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Yesterday and Today" will go to the United States and make the rounds of several states.

"As I mentioned, this is not a trade fair. I believe that it will change the image which many people, in Europe and elsewhere, have of Saudi Arabia, and will overturn their preconception that Saudi Arabia is all deserts, camels and oil wells. I believe that these people, when they visit the Kingdom or see these major achievements, will wish that such things could happen in their own country. I feel that the exhibition will be of interest to every Arab and Muslim. It is appropriate that the exhibit bear the name "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Yesterday and Today," for it truly is an exhibit for the Arab world in particular and the Islamic world in general."

8559

CSO: 4404/378

CONTRACT REACHED FOR BISHAH DAM PROJECT

Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 13 May 87 p 1

[Article: "The Minister of Agriculture Has Signed a Contract To Build the Giant Bishah Dam"]

[Text] In accordance with the agreement by the servant of the two holy shrines, King Fahd Ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, to the award of a bid for the construction of the great Bishah dam:

His excellency the minister of agriculture and water, Dr 'Abd-al-Rahman Ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz Al al-Shaykh, yesterday signed the construction contract with a specialized domestic company.

SNA has pointed out that the giant Bisha dam is the biggest dam in the country and the second biggest in the Middle East after the High Dam erected on the Nile river. Its total cost will come to 229,769,050 riyals. The dam will be of the concrete type, it will be 113 meters high and 507 meters long, and the storage capacity of the dam will total 325 million cubic meters of water. The dam will be built on the great Wadi Bishah, and the area of the water collection zone will come to 7,600 square kilometers. The volume of overflow drainage once the storage basin is filled will come to 5,561 cubic meters a second.

With respect to the volumes of material used in construction, these will come to 2 million cubic meters of concrete excavation, using 1.5 million cubic meters of ordinary and pre-stressed reinforced concrete designed to bear the pressures of the water. The dam has been designed to include six large tunnels which will be constructed on a number of levels of the dam with which to control the dam's machinery and equipment. The design of the dam has been made so that it will be run automatically. The period of construction for this great dam is about 60 months.

Following the signing of the contract, his excellency the minister of agriculture and water, Dr 'Abd-al-Rahman Ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz Al al-Shaykh, expressed his happiness with the inception of construction on this great vital project. His excellency said that this edifice of civilization, whose reservoir will cover an area of 7,600 kilometers and will store 325 million cubic

meters of water, is one of the gifts of this prosperous era and will have a great effect on the prosperity and development of agriculture in the region and the surroundings, in view of the effect it will have in increasing water reserves.

His excellency added that followup, guidance and impetus on the part of the servant of the two holy shrines, King Fahd Ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz, and his highness his loyal crown prince, His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz, are the basis for the actual start in the construction of this giant project and also the basis for the comprehensive agricultural development which our beloved country will be blessed with.

11887

CSO: 4404/389

VARIOUS INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS RECEIVE PERMITS IN FIRST QUARTER

Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 14 May 87 p 2

[Article by Ahmad al-Shimr: "Permits Are Granted to 808 Industrial Projects in the First Quarter of This Year"]

[Text] The number of permits the Ministry of Industry and Electricity has agreed to allow to be granted for various industrial projects in the Eastern Province up to the first quarter of the current lunar year totals 808, about 450 of which, or a share of 56 percent of the total of these projects, have been carried out.

That appeared in statistics which the magazine AL-IQTISAD issued by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the Eastern Province published in its latest issue.

It pointed out that these projects have included the metal, machine, construction material and glass industry, chemical, plastic and textile industry and paper, wood, leather and other industry sectors.

It pointed out that the total money invested in these projects has come to about 23 billion riyals. The magazine stated that the metal and machine industries have occupied first place in these industries, since the number of projects for which permits have been granted came to 285, of which 144 have been carried out, and this industry accounts for 35 percent of the total projects to have received permits in the province. They include metal furniture, aluminum doors and windows, metal frames, household containers, air conditioners, heaters, electric transformers, metal frames, heat exchangers, trailers and so forth.

The total money invested in this sector came to 5,966,000,000 riyals. The magazine added that among the abovementioned industries and projects the construction materials and glass industry assumed second place, since the number of projects which have been granted permits totals 153, of which 122 have been carried out. They account for about 19 percent of the total projects to have been granted permits in the region. Their products include blocks, tiles, ceramic and concrete brick and so forth. Their total invested

funds come to 8.25 billion riyals. The magazine went on to state that the chemical and plastic industries came in third place, since their projects came in number to 189, 81 of which have been carried out, accounting for 22 percent of the total projects to have been granted permits. They include plastic household products, low- and high-density polyethylene bags, insulating materials, (ghabirkalaki), perfumes, organic fertilizers, boats and medical syringes.

Their total invested funds came to 5,657,000,000 riyals. It also pointed out that food industries came in fourth place and the number of projects for which permits had been granted in their regard came to 100, of which 59 had been carried out, accounting for about 12 percent of the total projects. Their projects include distilled water, soda water, juices, milk and dairy products in addition to spaghetti, bread, ice, meat, fish, children's food, tea, flour halva, dates, fodder and so forth. The magazine stated that wood products came in fifth place and the number of projects which had received permits in their regard came to about 70, of which 33 had been carried out, accounting for 9 percent of the total projects. These have included wooden door and window, kitchen, bedroom, household furniture, ready-made house, wooden platform, cardboard box, paper, paper bag, printing, paper napkin, children's folder and computer paper products. Their total invested funds came to 950 million riyals.

The magazine also pointed out that the number of projects to be granted permits in the province with respect to leather industries, which assumed sixth place, came to 21, of which six have been carried out, representing 3 percent of the total projects. Their products include leather, leather shoes, tents, cloaks and flame-resistant covers.

Their total invested funds came to 295 million riyals.

11887

CSO: 4404/389

CAUSES OF 13 JANUARY INCIDENTS INVESTIGATED

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 2-8, 16-22, 23-29 May 87

[Article by Hamidah Na'na': "The Gory Morning in Aden; Part One: Rising to the Brink"]

[2-8 May 87 pp 25-28]

[Text] What happened in south Yemen, and why was there so much bloodshed in Aden?

Starting with this issue AL-TADAMUN's Hamidah Na'na' will attempt to answer these questions in a report that will appear in six installments. Hamidah Na'na' spent some time traveling between Aden and San'a' during which she talked with all the parties who were involved in what happened on the morning of 13 January 1986. Ms Na'na' inquired into what had happened and tried to get a clear understanding of the underlying causes and all possible future outcomes of the incidents that occurred. Here is the first installment of her report.

--On the morning of 13 January 1986 leaders of the branches of the military who are loyal to 'Ali Nasir were summoned to the Ministry of Defense by the chief of staff under the pretext of looking into the possibility that Israel might carry out a military operation against Aden. But the plan was to eliminate those leaders.

--Haytham Qasim, commander of the tank corps issued orders for the tanks to roll out of Salah-al-Din Camp. The tanks, which decided the situation in favor of 'Ali Nasir's opponents, forced 'Ali Nasir and those who were with him to flee to Abyan. From there they went to north Yemen where they are today.

Dim lights were coming out of the window of an airplane which was flying into Aden's new international airport coming from Sar'a'.

It was 12 o'clock noon when I was approached by a representative of the Ministry of Information who introduced himself and then helped me complete procedures.

Everything around me suggests an extraordinary tranquillity and business as usual. It were as though Aden had not experienced 10 days that shocked the entire world just 1 year ago.

My briefcase and my head were still teeming with statements by former Yemeni president 'Ali Nasir whom I had met 2 days ago in his exile in Yemen. I had listened to his complete account of the 13 January incidents. 'Ali Nasir and his colleagues used maps, reports and documents to corroborate their account of that day's incidents. They even used the testimony of eyewitnesses.

Occasionally, 'Ali Nasir appeared not to believe what had happened, and despite the bitterness of what had happened, he was confident he would return once again to Aden.

But how does 'Ali Nasir's hope appear today, that hope which has been burning in his breast to go back to Aden?

Does his return to Aden seem possible in Aden?

The paved, broad streets that lay on the way from the airport to Hotel Goldmoor reflected another aspect of the conflict. But before the naive media approach begins its attack on my head, I had to ask this question:

Did Aden really forget those difficult days? Did it forget 7,000 of its citizens who were struck down by bullets and by fear for no reason, or rather so that one man may go and another may come to take his place?

The streets in al-Tawahi were almost deserted. The female students I see here, unlike the ones I saw in San'a', are neither veiled nor meek and self-effacing. The escort's remarks interrupt my train of thought, but instead of explaining the history behind the sites and streets, he rather launches a vicious attack against 'Ali Nasir and his group. He recited a litany of insults and invective which both parts of Yemen exchange with each other. He did not give me a single moment to ask myself and others this question: Is it really easy to understand what happened on 13 January?

Why did what happened happen?

Will the tragedy be repeated some day?

Is it not normal for one to ask such questions as he tries to understand events in a country whose area is small but whose incidents have major significance?

On the following day one of my colleagues in the press told me, "You will follow the program which has been set for all journalists and official delegations. There will be a visit to the Central Committee's meeting room, a visit to the home of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il and, if you wish, a visit to the home of 'Ali 'Antar. There will be a visit to Abyan and to 'Ali Nasir's rest houses. After that there will be meetings with officials."

The meeting room in the Central Committee's Building was the first place I visited. It was there that three members of the Political Bureau, 'Ali 'Antar, Salih Muslih and 'Ali Shayi' Hadi, were assassinated. 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il and 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, however, managed to flee. They left the building in the evening: 'Abd-al-Fattah left in one tank that was completely destroyed in front of the navy building, and 'Ali Salim al-Bayd left in the second tank which

managed to escape unharmed and to go to al-Fath Camp. 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, the new secretary general of the Yemeni Party, thus managed to survive. I interviewed him near the end of my visit in Aden, and I found him to be confident about the future as though he knew what it would bring.

Inside the room, the stench of dry, rotting human blood was overpowering. Broken window panes, torn curtains, and military shoes, papers and clothing soiled with blood were scattered on the floor of the room. Although it had not been cleaned and the rotting blood stains had not been removed, this room was turned into a museum for visitors. The official who was responsible for that room asked me if I wanted to find out about the historical background of the conflict. I thought for a while, but the stench in the air was not conducive to listening or to helping one concentrate on what was being said. In addition, the guide, or the curator of that room, spoke in the same rhetorical, dogmatic manner which I had seen earlier that morning in the 14 OCTOBER Newspaper and had heard on television and on the radio. 'Ali Nasir and his group were responsible for everything: they were the ones who conspired against the party and the state, and they conspired against themselves and their colleagues. Did they do that simply because they liked to scheme and conspire. Or did God create them this way?

I felt that the prevailing logic here was neither reasonable nor factual. When I started walking out of the room of the Political Bureau, someone's hand got a hold of my arm. It was the guide; he wanted to show me the human hair on the pavement in the yard where a number of guards had been killed. Their corpses which had been left there to rot under the sun for over 10 days had stuck to the pavement. After that removing them without leaving behind any traces was difficult. Most certainly the dead men whose bodies had lain there came from both sides: they had been guards for 'Ali Nasir and his supporters as well as guards for 'Ali 'Antar and his supporters. There was a lump in my throat and a pang in my heart. Is this a scene that a visitor ought to be forced to see?

From the Central Committee's room we went to 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's home in al-Tawahi. The house which has three floors overlooks a poor, popular neighborhood on one side, and the sea on the other.

To get to the house one had to travel on a steep, paved but very dangerous road. The road is so steep, it is almost vertical. Why did 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il choose that house? Had he been looking for a place that would be removed from the hustle and bustle? If that were true, why did he not stay away from the turmoil of contradictions and alliances since he was a man who saw himself--and so did his friends--more as an artist, an intellectual, and a Marxist thinker than a man of conflict and power?

How can such a man agree to an alliance with 'Ali 'Antar, a man who is described by his closest friends as "a mindless man of many moods?" I recall meeting 'Ali 'Antar in a socialist country after his ouster from the presidency and the party's secretariat by 'Abd-al-Fattah. 'Ali Nasir then went to Moscow on 21 April 1980, but his departure and resignation remained an unsolved mystery to us, and that mystery was as baffling to us as all the stories that were coming out of Yemen were. These were stories about incidents like the death of Salimin, the execution of Faysal al-Sha'bi, the exile and expulsion of Muhammad 'Ali Haytham, and the execution of Salih Muti'.

When I met 'Ali 'Antar that day I asked him why 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il had been driven out of the country and sent to Moscow. He laughed out loud and said, "He can read there all the Marxist books he wants!"

When I asked him about himself and about how he will improve his socialist education, he said, "I don't have to read about Marxism to understand it."

Ever since that meeting 'Ali Nasir became to me at least an inscrutable Yemeni mystery.

Today, 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's home has become a museum. His portrait, which shows his medals and sashes and is like Lenin's official portrait, hangs in the foyer whose walls are adorned by some of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's poetry. Inside the burned down home are medals which had been given to him by socialist countries. There are also weapons, some of his manuscripts, and the remains of his burned books. It is being said that he had about 5,000 books. A more discriminating guide here gives one an opportunity to contemplate what one is seeing. He does not intrude upon one with a memorized speech. But at the end of the visit the guide approached visitors and asked them to sign the guest register book. Just as I managed to get out of seeing the hair that was stuck to the pavement, I was able to get away without signing the huge guest book. I was not going to write anything down before finding out what had really happened.

As I traveled back to the hotel from 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's house, I was surrounded by death. It seemed that Aden had wrapped its arms around my neck to choke me. I wanted to get out of that city as soon as possible. I wanted to leave the stench of death and destruction behind. I wanted to get away from the resentment that seemed to lurk around every street corner. I wanted to get away from the still waters of the ocean which, I was told, had turned red for days during the incidents. My friend, the poet, Zaki Barakat, was killed, and there had been so much bloodshed that blood had washed ashore on the opposite side of the ocean in Asia.

The pressing question that I was asking myself then was not what had happened but rather why did it happen?

Any satisfactory answer to the second question would have essentially given me an understanding of the facts and details of what had happened on 13 January and on the following days. Details about the killing, execution, death and prison were manifestations of the consequences of a crisis, not the crisis itself, albeit those consequences were horrible and inhuman.

I asked myself, why is there an uprising in this country every 4 or 5 years in which the country's leader or leaders are killed? Why has the revolution consumed its citizens in this grievous manner? Why doesn't Yemen have a national hero? Everyone who had led Yemen into victory was accused of being someone's agent, and he was accused of treachery and conspiracy. Everyone who had led Yemen to independence was slaughtered, driven out of his home, or driven out of the country and even pursued abroad. Why is there so much hatred and resentment?

Is this the revolution's rationale? Are these the supreme orders of an ideology, or are they the backward understanding of socialist ideas?

Is this the price of adhering to progressive ideas in an area where life is led according to a plan which differs radically from that offered by Democratic Yemen?

Is this experiment likely to survive?

Did the January incidents fail in an alarming manner? Did they leave behind nothing more than linguistic misrepresentations of what had happened which will eventually be wiped out and forgotten? All these questions crossed my mind as I crossed al-Tawahi bridge on my way back to the hotel. To our right the ocean was still. Only the croaking of black ravens which abound in the Gulf of Aden disturbed that stillness. I looked at my watch, and I looked carefully at the date. Ten months have gone by since the January incidents, but the people's wounds have not yet healed. The blood that flowed through the city streets is still red, and the gloomy memory of death and resentment still hovers atop the hills surrounding the city.

All these facts and all these questions place a moral, cultural and national responsibility on someone like me who visits Yemen. Everything I write must be written with a sense of responsibility because a tendency to simplify matters in such a case becomes a crime. The crisis in south Yemen is part of the general crisis which the Arab homeland is experiencing. In the absence of a civilized plan, small gains and plans become the alternative.

What did happen on 13 January?

Did 'Ali Nasir carry out a coup against himself? Did he fail to eliminate his opponents? Were the tables turned on him, and did he lose the battle?

Or was what happened a coup that had been planned against 'Ali Nasir? Did the man eventually come face to face with the fact that he would either have to kill or be killed? Had the Yemeni experiment come to a turning point in the crisis? Was that experiment to be terminated by an international decision which required the use of such terrifying and deadly violence?

What happened on 13 January, and why did it happen?

At first, I will relate the official account which is prevalent in Aden. It is an account with many holes, an account that cannot stand up to serious inquiry. So far, however, it is the story that has been sanctioned by the media and by statements made by officials to the press. I made an extraordinary effort later to get the other story which explains to a large extent some of what happened on 13 January 1986, the day of the disaster.

The official account in Aden says that during his term in office and after removing 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il from the party's general secretariat on 21 April 1980 with the support of 'Ali 'Antar and most party leaders, 'Ali Nasir managed to arrogate all power to himself. He then tried to have all the important historical leaders removed from their positions and replaced by those who had played no role in the war of liberation or in setting up the country's experiment.

With those people 'Ali Nasir was able to govern in a new style which deviated from the party's course and from the course of the socialist experiment. According to 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, party circles resisted what 'Ali Nasir was doing, and their resistance grew to a point which forced the Political Bureau and 'Ali Nasir personally to decide that 'Abd-al-Fattah could come back to Aden in February 1985 so he could assume his position as secretary of the party's general department. With 'Abd-al-Fattah's return conflicts were resumed. The conflicts also grew, and 'Abd-al-Fattah managed to form alliances with party leaders like 'Ali 'Antar, 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, Salim Salih, Muhsin al-Sharjabi, 'Ali Shayi' Hadi, Salih Muslih Qasim and other figures and personnel who opposed 'Ali Nasir's autocracy. They formed that alliance to force 'Ali Nasir to restore collective leadership.

Officials in Aden affirm that this alliance was formed to strengthen central democracy, to emphasize the party's authority rather than that of the individual, and to limit the excesses committed by 'Ali Nasir and his group, not to overthrow 'Ali Nasir Muhammad. An official in Aden relates that when 'Ali Nasir realized during the general elections that the results of these elections would not be in his favor, he decided to use weapons and to rely on a few prominent military men who support him. Among those men were Chief of Staff 'Ali 'Ulaywah; Ahmad 'Abdallah, commander of naval forces; 'Abdallah al-Batani, minister of interior; and Ahmad Musa'id, minister of state security.

In that regard Salim Salih, assistant secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party affirms that 'Ali Nasir and his group managed to set up training camps in Abyan and Shabwah. He said they imported weapons from abroad and distributed them to their supporters. 'Ali Nasir, however, did not carry out his coup, and the possibility of a military solution continued to exist even as preparations for the party's third congress were underway. An armed outbreak was feared. A compromise was reached when both parties accepted the application of a series of controls which were proposed by Salih Muslim and Jarallah 'Umar. The aim of these controls was to suspend a few articles in the party's bylaws. There would be no secret ballot; delegates to the congress would be sworn in by agreement in the Political Bureau; and the Central Committee would use its right to add 37 delegates who favor 'Ali Nasir.

Thus, the congress was convened in October 1985 under the threat of weapons, but the atmosphere did not become calm after the congress. Opposition continued, especially after the Central Committee was formed: most of its members supported 'Ali Nasir while most of the members of the Political Bureau supported the opposition.

The party thus found itself in a state of semi-paralysis. In this regard 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party (the Aden Group) assured me that after the congress President 'Ali Nasir tried to delay the Central Committee's meetings for almost 2 months because he was afraid that duties and responsibilities would be distributed among committee members, and he and his group would then lose control over key positions.

In the meantime 'Ali Nasir was shoring up his military position. To gain time he traveled abroad and visited Bulgaria, Ethiopia and San'a'. He was active on the diplomatic front, contacting the Soviets, Arab communist parties and Palestinian

leaders, including Dr George Habash, the spiritual father of the Yemeni experiment, and Nayif Hawatimah. 'Ali Nasir wanted them to act as mediators between him and other parties represented by the bloc that consists of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il, 'Ali 'Antar, 'Ali Shayi' Hadi and Salih Muslih.

As a result of these efforts a meeting of the Political Bureau was convened on 9 January 1986 to discuss the secretariat's responsibilities and the distribution of positions. The demands that were made at that meeting were clear: 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il was to take over the organizational department, and Salim Salih Muhammad was to be in charge of foreign relations. The meeting was adjourned till 13 January. Officials in Aden affirm that it was during those days that 'Ali Nasir completed his preparations for a military solution. Orders were issued Saturday morning to all military personnel who support him in all the branches of the military. They were instructed to mobilize fully. At the same time 'Ali Nasir held talks with the other party. Muhammad 'Ali Ahmad, the governor of Abyan and one of the most important figures who joined 'Ali Nasir contacted the defense minister. 'Ali Nasir himself visited Abu Bakr al-'Attas who was supposed to head a delegation that was scheduled to leave the country on its way to India before the meeting of the Political Bureau.

Officials think that these talks were nothing more than a last minute maneuver on 'Ali Nasir's part who had already decided on the military option. More than 1,000 of his armed supporters had occupied central positions in the city. They had also occupied Aden Hotel which is strategically located in the city and commands both parts of the capital.

It is being said that 'Ali Nasir contrived the incident in which a military airplane carrying approximately 75 persons was shot down. He wanted to use this incident to have weapons carried to his supporters. 'Ali Nasir's troops did in fact control al-Tawahi Bridge, al-Shaykh 'Uthman, the Ministry of Agriculture, the (Kirmir) Police, the Oil and Minerals Authority and the Federation of Yemeni Women.

On the morning of 13 January Chief of Staff 'Ali 'Ulaywah summoned the leaders of the branches of the military who are loyal to 'Ali Nasir to a meeting to discuss with them a possible Israeli military operation against Aden. But the plan was to arrest those leaders in the Ministry of Defense and to eliminate them physically. At the same time, the same thing was to be done at other camps and institutions.

The plan called for starting out at the meeting by eliminating Political Bureau members who opposed 'Ali Nasir. That was to be followed by eliminating their supporters in other sectors and institutions.

Political Bureau members, Salim al-Bayd, Salim Salih, and those who were with them, affirm that the plan was carried out exactly as planned by 'Ali Nasir's guards. 'Ali Nasir's personal bodyguard, Hassan, carried out this mission, but it was a failure in executing the plan that saved the lives of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il and Salim al-Bayd. Later, at 7 p.m. the two men were able to contact the Soviet Embassy. Afterwards they contacted the leaders of the forces loyal to the embassy. Fierce battles were fought in the streets of Aden; all kinds of weapons were used in those battles, even rocket launchers.

The armored division or the tank corp, as it is called in Aden, was the branch of the military which decided the battle in favor of 'Ali Nasir's opponents. The commander of these forces is Haytham Qasim, a young man under 40 whose ambitions extend beyond Yemen's borders. Salim al-Bayd affirms that Haytham Qasim had no previous military plan. During the meeting he heard the sounds of gunfire coming from the Central Committee Building. He fled quickly, traveling from the Ministry of Defense to Salah-al-Din Camp, which is more than 50 kilometers from the city, in 20 minutes. Tanks rolled out of Salah-al-Din camp after 12 o'clock noon, but 1,000 fighters supporting 'Ali 'Antar had come from the areas of al-Hajj, al-Dali', Radfan and Yafa'i. They came to provide support for the tanks after it was announced that members of the Political Bureau had been executed. A fierce battle was fought in the streets for 9 full days; eventually, it was decided in favor of 'Ali Nasir's opponents. 'Ali Nasir and his group fled to Abyan and from there they went north where they are now with the armed men who joined them.

This is the account about the incidents which is offered by officials in Aden. It is a story they corroborate with details about massacres committed by 'Ali Nasir and his group. There is hardly a day that scenes of corpses lying in the streets of Aden during the 9 days of the battle are not shown on television. These scenes are then followed by movies in which the secretary general, the assistant secretary general and officials talk about details of the incidents and the disputes which preceded the battle. These are incidents and details which confirm their point of view but do not touch upon the secrets behind the other party's position and the reasons for it.

This was the official account I heard from officials in Aden, but it was most certainly not the only one.

'Ali Nasir's supporters in San'a' have another story to tell, and many intellectuals and journalists in Aden have yet a different story.

If it is difficult to accept the official story, coming up with one that is more truthful and rational requires much effort. Although I did make an effort, I am not saying that the account I have is the complete, true story. Quite some time may be needed before the mysteries and details of that full, true story can be brought to light. Finding out that true story requires more digging and more patience, and it also requires much, much objectivity.

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[Text] [Part Three] The Morning of 13 January

Salih Muti' was executed because of a report submitted by Salih Munassir al-Siyayli, who was then minister of state security.

The elimination of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il was discussed at some gatherings, but sending him away to Moscow saved his life.

'Ali Nasir lost control of the army, and 'Ali 'Antar's influence on the military establishment continued even after his departure.

After meeting officials in Aden and meeting a number of leaders of Arab and Palestinian political factions living in the capital of Democratic Yemen, I met with a few families and intellectuals. After those meetings I came back with information and impressions which, to a large extent, contradicted the official account I had heard in Aden about the 13 January incidents. This is the story that is being endorsed by the media.

I decided to go back to San'a' to find out what the truth was and to meet with a few figures who are considered by the official accounts the real conspirators behind the 13 January tragedy. Among those figures are Muhammad 'Ali Ahmad, the governor of Abyan; Ahmad Musa'id Husayn, minister of state security; and Ahmad 'Abdallah, commander of the navy. Mr 'Abdallah's name is being mentioned in every home in Aden because he had continued to fight for 9 days. He and the fleet he was commanding then withdrew to Ethiopia without losing a single vessel.

Officials in Aden were struck by the fact that I had not met with those figures in San'a'. Even Salim Salih, assistant secretary general told me, "Then, you did not find out the details of the tragedy, and you did not find out who the conspirators are." I remember asking him if he truly believed that it was 'Ali Nasir who was behind such violence. Ever since the war of liberation the history of the man shows that he is not at all predisposed to violence and bloodshed. Mr Salim Salih replied, "No. I think that 'Ali Nasir was pushed into the 13 January massacre by Muhammad 'Ali Ahmad, the governor of Abyan, and by Ahmad Musa'id Husayn, the minister of state security. They led him to believe that everything would be over in a matter of hours. They told him the matter would be easy."

There are then other aspects to the story which seem important in finding out the reasons and the root causes for what happened on the morning of 13 January. The accounts are contradictory. In fact, the official account of the incidents is quite different from the story 'Ali Nasir and his colleagues are telling. That difference is thought to be a reason for going back to the root causes and details of the conflict.

To find out what happened on 13 January, we must first state for the record that personal differences and tribal conflicts which nurture those differences go back to a previous stage which began with independence. After the National Front seized power in the country, it did not use democratic solutions to resolve conflicts and reconcile the different positions of its individual members. Instead, it used violence which became an established tradition in dealing with crises. Although the struggle against Qahtan al-Sha'bi was just, the method that was utilized to eliminate him and keep him away marked the real beginning of the blood baths which were to be repeated every 4 or 5 years. It were as though that were the inescapable destiny of Yemeni socialism. After Qahtan was eliminated, Faysal 'Abd-al-Latif al-Sha'bi, one of the most prominent national figures and the one with the longest history of struggling against colonialism, was eliminated. Then there was a replay of all that: Muhammad 'Ali Haytham was sent away, but by some miracle he got out of Yemen alive in 1971. He went to Moscow to further his studies and his theoretical awareness. One year later the front convened its congress, and that was preceded and followed by physical eliminations which made matters worse and intensified feelings of hatred. Before matters were settled after the congress, the airplane incident occurred in 1973.

A number of diplomats and leaders abroad were invited to participate in a re-education course. While they were en route to one of the areas, the airplane that was flying them to their destination was blown up on 30 April 1973. More than 100 persons died in that accident.

At that time Yemen was going through the cultural revolution which was led by Salimin. As glittering and tempting as the slogans of that revolution were, they were totally removed from the facts and from the conflicts and problems of real life. It was that which induced an entire movement within the political leadership to oppose Salimin. Salimin was opposed not because he had strayed away from revolutionary premises, but because he had exclusive power. To the other party, having exclusive power always meant gaining something that society does not make available more than it meant achieving objectives which are radically different from those of the other party. It is now known that while they were engaged in conflict with Salimin, 'Ali 'Antar and 'Ali Salim al-Bayd were also his allies. Their relationship with 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il was one of hatred and hostility at a time when 'Abd-al-Fattah and his group had defined an early position toward Salimin. In the last moments, however, positions were exchanged, and Salih Muslih and 'Ali Salim al-Bayd opposed Salimin. It was this that helped overthrow him. Overthrowing Salimin, however, did not settle accounts, and the blood which covered the walls of the presidential palace did not wipe out the feelings of resentment.

Despite the theoretical success of the operation to merge factions together and form the Yemeni Socialist Party, conflicts between leaders of the National Front persisted. While 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il and Muhsin, on the one hand, represented one center, 'Ali 'Antar represented another against 'Abd-al-Fattah's. In the absence of a democratic climate to control the conflict, each one of the two parties turned to a war of intrigue, reports and conspiracies. This was the same war that had been used before against Salimin. In August 1979, for example, 'Ali 'Antar presented a report against Muhsin to the party's Central Committee. The report, which dealt with the conflict over the subject of political reconnaissance in the Ministry of Defense, accused Muhsin, minister of state security, of spying on members of the party and on leaders. The report also accused him of making plans to kidnap a few officials. Muhsin countered with similar charges. 'Ali 'Antar then launched a campaign against 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il, and he was joined by Salim Muslih, al-Bayd, Muti', and 'Ali Sha'i'. The campaign ended with 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's ouster and his departure to Moscow. 'Abd-al-Fattah had served as secretary general of the party and speaker of the Supreme People's Council. 'Ali Nasir affirms that it was a miracle that 'Abd-al-Fattah escaped with his life. Discussions and conflicts about his elimination had become more intense during a celebration that was being held to honor him.

Salih Muti' was executed after 'Abd-al-Fattah's departure. He had served as Salimin's minister of foreign affairs and had held that post after Salimin. Muti' was executed because he had been accused of conspiracy and of working for a foreign state. These charges were ready to be brought out of cabinets and files. Salih Muti' was executed because of a report that was submitted then by Salih Munassir al-Siyayli, current minister of interior, then minister of state security. The report which was submitted to the party accused Salih Muti' of high treason. It is ironical that al-Siyayli is one of those asking for the

restoration of Muti's good name. Later, Salih Muti's execution had its effect on existing alliances, and it will most certainly have its effect on government in Aden in the future. 'Ali 'Antar had not agreed to the execution of Muti'. In fact, he was not in the country when the execution was carried out. When he returned from India he demanded that those who were behind the execution of Muti be called to account for their action.

'Ali 'Antar took over the Ministry of Defence between 1977 and 1980. During those 4 years he managed to change the makeup of the army, and he established control over significant army sectors. It was the tank corps, however, led by Haytham Qasim that was the most effective branch of the military. It was the tank corps that decided the battle during the fighting after 13 January. It is worth noting that 'Ali Nasir, the party's secretary general and speaker of the Supreme People's Council was not able to do anything against the army after the crisis got worse in 1984, 1985 and 1986 because he feared military action. In arranging the army's conditions to serve his own advantage, 'Ali 'Antar adopted a new method which is manifested in the following:

First, he would eliminate the officers who had served in the army before independence and who are from Abyan and Shabwah, and he would keep more than 150 officers who are from Lahaj and al-Dali'.

Second, under the slogan of "liquidating the opportunistic left" he would eliminate the group of officers who were supporting Salimin.

That was accomplished either by firing people from their jobs or transferring them to civilian administrations and replacing them by residents of his area. In the last days before the incidents broke out, the Third Brigade (the tank brigade) had become a serious problem for the party and the state because no one in the government could control it. 'Ali Nasir tried to have that brigade moved to the border, but his attempt to do that failed. During elections for the third congress it was noticed that significant sectors of the army had voted against leaders who were party members. As a result many leaders and graduates of military academies lost their election bids. 'Ali Nasir Muhammad most certainly could not make the military decision to restore balance to the army, and 'Ali 'Antar was always threatening to use the army against 'Ali Nasir. Although he was removed from the Ministry of Defense in 1981, he continued to have influence within the military establishment, either through Salih Muslih, the minister of defense or through a few military leaders who are loyal to him.

Those who worked with 'Ali 'Antar affirm that when he was in the Ministry of Defense, the ministry was not subject to any budgetary or spending controls. We might consider what Ahmad 'Abdallah (the former navy commander who is now with 'Ali Nasir) said in this regard to justify the absence of such controls. 'Ali 'Antar was always trying to sell the idea of settling disputes within the party militarily, and he offered all military leaders all kinds of positions as an incentive.

But where was 'Ali Nasir while all this was going on? Why was he silent? How is it that he did not reject this method of eliminating people until he himself became its target?

When I asked 'Ali Nasir Muhammad these questions, he said, "I had known for some time that there was a power struggle going on, and I knew that attaining positions was their primary motivation ever since independence. But I decided to work on building the state. If I were to become involved in their conflicts, I would accomplish nothing."

Observers in Aden confirm that 'Ali Nasir is telling the truth. Evidence that he is lies in the fact that after Salimin was sent out of the country in 1978, the feuding parties asked 'Ali Nasir to serve as speaker of the Supreme People's Council in addition to his position as prime minister. He accepted reluctantly, and he told 'Ali 'Antar, "I know you all too well. You are in agreement today, but tomorrow you will turn against me." Then when 'Ali Nasir was asked to give up the speaker's position and turn it over to 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il, he did so voluntarily, serving only as prime minister till 1980 when 'Abd-al-Fattah was sent away to Moscow. 'Ali Nasir was then asked to take over the functions of the general secretariat and serve as speaker of the council. He accepted both positions, but he did not give up his position as prime minister because he was convinced that uniform decisions were required for building the state in a country like Yemen, particularly since the group that was serving with him lacked homogeneity and a uniform vision.

'Ali Nasir inherited this complex situation. He inherited an army that was beset by tribalism and feelings of personal loyalties. He inherited an economy that never had the strength and stability that would enable him to achieve independence. Moreover, he inherited a political party whose political factions had been merged together for only a few years. Many of that party's decisions were still controlled by organizational fanaticism. 'Ali Nasir also inherited extremely complex international and Arab relations. Relations with north Yemen were especially complicated because the issue of using force to bring about unity during the days of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il had led to armed confrontation between the two countries on more than one occasion.

That was how 'Ali Nasir started dealing with the facts in a crisis. Those who know him and who dealt with him closely say that in managing conflicts or crises, he would always discuss matters and avoid making snap decisions. He would always talk about, "striving for the unity of all: everyone is here, and everyone contributes." Most of his efforts and the efforts of the men who worked with him, however, were devoted to the economy and to rebuilding the state, but the army was left to Salih Muslih and 'Ali 'Antar.

'Ali Nasir realized that the party was having a real crisis of growth since the generation which had grown up under the revolution had studied abroad and had been groomed in party cadre schools at the best socialist universities. Members of that generation were always finding themselves running up against a wall of historical leaders or their whims--and their whims were many. 'Ali Nasir tried to bring new blood into the party. The Political Bureau, which was formed after the emergency general congress meeting, provided evidence of what 'Ali Nasir was trying to do. 'Ali Nasir and 'Ali 'Antar were the only historical leaders who were serving in that bureau. An opportunity was given to the factions which had merged with the party, and those factions were represented by young people. Abu Bakr Badhib replaced his older brother 'Ali Badhib; 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Qadir,

a young man, replaced Anis Bayhi; and Salih Munassir al-Siyayli was to serve in the Political Bureau for the first time. Two members who had been candidates for a second term were 'Abdallah al-Khamiri and 'Ali Shayi'.

The party's emergency general congress was convened in October 1981. Party unity was 'Ali Nasir Muhammad's primary concern: responsibility for the party and for the state had fallen on his shoulders. After the congress Democratic Yemen seemed to be experiencing a new stage of stability. 'Ali Nasir, who had served as prime minister for 15 years, was the government's man; he was the development man, and he was now president of the party and the state. His main concerns were economic growth and development. To ensure the political climate 'Ali Nasir was always careful about having good relations with all parties. However, the ouster of 'Ali 'Antar from the Ministry of Defense in 1981 had negative effects on the nature of the relationship between the two men. At that time 'Ali Nasir made a grave mistake when he ousted 'Ali 'Antar from his position as defense minister but did not oust him from the army. 'Ali 'Antar was not stripped of his military titles, and he was appointed deputy speaker of the Supreme People's Council. Those who know 'Ali 'Antar well knew what that meant. 'Ali 'Antar is a simple man of limited education and resources. He is undoubtedly a patriot who played a part in the war of liberation. But the war of liberation which benefited from 'Ali 'Antar's capabilities differs from a stage in which a state is being built. Such a stage requires capabilities of a different kind. However, neither historical leaders realized that fact, nor those in leadership positions who succeeded each other were able to decide that matter. That was how I put that question to 'Ali Nasir Muhammad: "Why was there a determination to keep historical leaders in responsible positions for which they were not qualified while hundreds of party personnel who had received military, scientific or political training abroad had no responsibilities assigned to them?"

'Ali Nasir replied, "Matters are not that simple. Historical leaders represent hidden balances in the makeup of society. We had not yet reached that stage in our development in which these balances would not be a subject of concern. We wanted the democratic revolutionary stage to be completed with the least possible agitation."

When I interpret 'Ali Nasir's remarks without reference to the sensitive nature of his responsible position, I would infer that the presence of a number of historical leaders in positions of power, regardless of their competence and abilities, came about out of consideration for tribal balances. Would I not be right to wonder in this case about the party's metal and the extent to which it represents a new mental attitude which is supposed to be prevalent in party circles?

Political tranquillity did not last. After his departure from the Ministry of Defense 'Ali 'Antar succeeded in forging new alliances whose aim was to help him regain his position. Those who knew him closely during that period say that he was talking about what he called "a revolutionary awakening" which would come about by the end of 1982. That awakening meant that 'Ali 'Antar had realized his mistake in driving 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il out of Aden. With 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il out of the country, in Moscow, 'Antar thought he would be closer to the first position in the country. But since he is not qualified for that, driving 'Abd-al-Fattah out of the country had not changed anything, and the primary responsibility still lay in 'Ali Nasir Muhammad's hands.

By means of the three offices he held--the offices of prime minister, president and general secretary--'Ali Nasir was to a large extent able to make decisions despite obstacles which could stand in his way. But as he assured me, his decisions were based on decisions made by the party, as represented by the Political Bureau and the Central Committee. Nevertheless, his colleagues in Aden portrayed him as a 20th century dictator. That was in theory; in practice, however, most members of the Central Committee, which is regarded as the highest legitimate body in the party, left the country with 'Ali Nasir; those who did not are now in prison. This means quite simply that, as an institution, the party was not against 'Ali Nasir. Personal, tribal and partisan elements are interwoven in the blocs within the party which are led by those who are part of the historical leadership system.

'Ali 'Antar went to Moscow in 1983 where he met with 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il, and the two men agreed that Isma'il was to return to Aden. It is difficult today to understand why and on what bases 'Abd-al-Fattah decided to return, but it is certain that his reasons were not quite sound. 'Ali Nasir was not a weak figure then because Democratic Yemen was enjoying a period of prosperity and security that was attributed to a period of relative tranquillity in the country, to 'Ali Nasir's personality, to his experience in growth and development and to stable conditions in Yemen. 'Ali Nasir was therefore widely popular among the Yemeni populace, and that gave him the momentum for taking strong action on the regional front. He succeeded in achieving excellent relations with the north after concluding a pact with President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to solve the problem of the National Front. He guaranteed that this front would be one of the parties participating in a dialogue for drafting the national charter. He also guaranteed that AL-AMAL Newspaper would be published in San'a'. Publication of that newspaper was later suspended.

The normalization of relations with the north was the key to normalizing relations with the countries of the Gulf area in general. The problem with Oman was thus settled, and Democratic Yemen was now facing the question of domestic development, now that its adventures in exporting revolution had been suspended. Revolutions are not commodities to be exported. No one can force a course of action on his neighbors or on other nations, and no one can tell them what they should do for their future.

Democratic Yemen acquired a position of distinction in the Arab world that could be more important than its resources and capabilities. The case was the same with regard to international relations. Wittingly or unwittingly, 'Ali Nasir Muhammad did serve Soviet strategy in the Gulf. His rational policies allowed the Soviets to establish normal relations with Oman and avoid tense relations with the north. And yet, I cannot explain the decision to have 'Abd-al-Fattah return to Aden as one of 'Ali 'Antar's whims or as something that 'Abd-al-Fattah wanted. We have to say, therefore, that the Soviets had to have something to say about it. Did they believe that 'Abd-al-Fattah's return could help distribute power and make a collective leadership workable? For example, 'Ali Nasir would serve as president, 'Abd-al-Fattah would serve as party secretary, and 'Ali 'Antar would serve as defense minister. Would collective leadership in a country whose makeup and conditions are like those in Democratic Yemen promote the country's development, stability and security? It is particularly noteworthy

that one of the items on the agenda for the January 1986 meeting of the Political Bureau stated, "Rebuilding the State and its institutions--a discussion."

I am not referring to individualism here. After what happened, however, it is our right to ask if it is possible to abolish the individual's role completely, as leaders of south Yemen think it should be. If abolishing an individual's role were easy, desirable or possible, how can we explain the phenomenon of individual leaders in most socialist countries? How can we explain Mao Tse Tung Kim Il-song and others?

'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's return to Aden in February 1985 after his alliance with 'Ali 'Antar disrupted the balances and considerations on whose bases 'Ali Nasir had been able to build the stability of his government. 'Abd-al-Fattah was capable of utilizing any alliance in any form to shore up his position. It seems that he was in a hurry to attend the congress of the Soviet Communist Party as secretary general. He wanted to make things happen quickly so that he would become responsible for the party. To accomplish that even an alliance with 'Ali 'Antar became possible despite the radical differences in points of view, positions, and ideas of both men.

For the rest of 1985 Political Bureau meetings and Central Committee meetings became a battlefield between the two groups. 'Ali Nasir Muhammad and his supporters in the Political Bureau and the Central Committee were convinced by the information they had and the daily conduct of the other side that 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's return and the manner in which that return was accomplished were nothing more than the onset of a conspiracy whose objective was to remove 'Ali Nasir from government. The practices and conduct of the other party confirmed and increased those suspicions. The situation thus began to develop, and everything pointed to another outbreak. Disputes and conflicts within the government had several consequences. They are:

--The role of the army was defined: it was to be used as a pressure tool in the conflict.

--Efforts aimed at expanding the ranks of the party's social base and adding young people to its members were suspended.

--Tribalism emerged in a manner that Yemen had never before experienced.

'Ali 'Antar was able to use the tribal base and to stir up the tribes in an unprecedented manner. He traveled to the tribal areas--to Lahij, al-Sali', Radfan and Iafa'i--to deliver speeches in which he talked about 'Ali Nasir Muhammad's excesses. To 'Ali 'Antar these excesses were manifested most in the fact that 'Ali Nasir had spent millions of dollars to build the Aden Hotel which he then turned into a capitalist stronghold. 'Ali Nasir also allowed water to flow in the streets of Aden when the tribes were deprived of water. In this remark 'Ali 'Antar was referring to the lake that was built by the municipality of Aden in the public square in front of the hotel.

Unfortunately, the conflict seemed naive and ludicrous on the surface. But according to one Political Bureau member I met in San'a', 'Ali Nasir had to

spend more than three quarters of an hour at one Political Bureau meeting to explain to 'Ali 'Antar the idea behind recycling water. He also explained to him that the loan which was extended to Aden by French banks to build the Aden Hotel carried a 7 percent interest rate. He told him it was a 21 million dollar loan, not a 40 million dollar loan as 'Ali 'Antar had indicated in his popular conferences. 'Ali Nasir also explained that the hotel was not built at the expense of the cement plant because construction of the cement plant came first, and an agreement had been made with Democratic Germany to build it.

While the Central Committee was holding its 11th and 12th session meetings between 11 and 13 February, Aden took on the appearance of Beirut. There were armed barricades and strange faces. No one knew where all this had come from. The debates and discussions which were going on inside the meeting room were relying on the guns and tanks outside. When the meetings were adjourned, elections for the congress were started, and they were held under the threat of guns also. During the elections each party tried to use its maximum capabilities against the other party.

In March 1985 a grave and very important matter was brought to the Political Bureau's attention. It was the matter of buying and selling weapons. The subject came up because charges had been made by some members of the Political Bureau against Defense Minister Salih Muslih who was accused of buying and selling weapons. At that meeting the Political Bureau asked Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas to investigate the matter. Forty-five thousand rifles and 1 million rounds of ammunition were actually confiscated from Muhsin Qa'id, a weapons dealer who had close relations with Salih Muslih and 'Ali Shayi' Hadi. Once again, however, confiscating weapons proved to be futile in ending the crisis. Instead, the crisis continued.

Nevertheless, preparations for the congress continued. After several settlements and controls were established, an agreement was reached in the party's Political Bureau to see to it that political elements from 'Ali 'Antar's and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's tendency would win in the election. These were people like Muhsin al-Sharji, Mahmud 'Ashish, Muhammad Ahmad Jarhum and others. Twenty-three persons who had not won in the election were also brought into the general congress.

In February 1985 'Ali Nasir gave up the prime minister's office and turned it over to Abu Bakr Haydar al-'Attas. He wanted to set up a positive, appropriate political climate for convening the congress. It is worth noting that the political address which was delivered by al-'Attas when he took over the position of prime minister was tantamount to an encomium for 'Ali Nasir Muhammad who had become "a teacher, an educator, a savior and a statesman."

'Ali Nasir's opponents, however, regarded that step as a concession; they did not see it as an attempt on his part to set up an appropriate climate for political reconciliation. That is why on 9 May 1985 they attempted a military coup to overthrow 'Ali Nasir, but the conspiracy was uncovered and the attempt was foiled at the eleventh hour. But the fact that the conspiracy was exposed did not put an end to Salih Muslih's and 'Ali 'Antar's efforts: they continued amassing weapons and bringing armed men into the capital. If we were to check the Political Bureau's records today, we would be able to read a report that was

submitted by Ahmad Musa'id Husayn, minister of state security, at one of the bureau's meetings before the incidents broke out. In that report the minister pinpoints the locations where the weapons were distributed and stored and asks the Political Bureau to grant him emergency powers to eliminate all those who are armed in the capital. However, 'Ali 'Antar strongly opposed that request, and he was supported by Salih Muslih and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il.

Two months before the congress was convened, Arab and friendly forces tried to intervene to reconcile the two parties. Meetings and deliberations were held in Aden, and Nayif Hawatimah and George Habash spent several days in meetings with both parties, but nothing to speak of was achieved. George Habash was pushing for a party congress, and when 'Ali 'Antar objected, Habash threatened him by saying, "I will leave Aden and I'll announce to all fighters in liberation movements and all honorable progressive regimes that 'Ali 'Antar wants to destroy Democratic Yemen's experiment." Finally, 'Ali 'Antar, 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il and Salih Muslih consented to convening the congress, hoping they will succeed in using the party's legitimate mechanism to bring down 'Ali Nasir after they had failed to bring him down by means of a coup.

In October 1985 while the congress was in session, an explosion in Aden seemed imminent. It is being said that tanks and all other branches of the military had been fully mobilized and that they maintained that state of mobilization throughout the duration of the congress. At the same time the people's militias, armed with light weapons, were in the streets of Aden where they held strategic positions. Each person in the congress, however, was negotiating on behalf of his military division and the military force that was outside. 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Qadir, member of the Central Committee says, "I would sometimes use threats in the congress, but I had nothing backing me up but ideas, theories and faith in the party's role. 'Ali 'Antar, however, was making threats and the tanks and the army were backing him up."

Thanks to the controls which were proposed by Salih Muslih and Jarallah 'Umar and the compromises which friendly parties managed to bring forward, the two parties managed to get out of the congress with a Central Committee, in which 'Ali Nasir Muhammad had a majority, and a Political Bureau, where 'Ali 'Antar and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il had a majority. People heaved a sigh of relief, and intermediaries expected that the disputes had come to an end. But the tranquillity which prevailed over Aden after the congress was more like the calm before the storm.

Once again disputes arose over the distribution of the secretariat's functions in the Central Committee. The dispute revolved around two positions: the secretary of foreign relations, a position held by 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Qadir; and the secretary of the Organizational Department, a position held by Abu Bakr Badhib. While waiting for the Central Committee and the Political Bureau to meet to endorse any explanations, the minister of defense carried out a major military exercise which featured a major role for tanks and was called "Dir' 85" [Armor 85]. The plan that was carried out in the exercise was the same plan that was carried out on 13 January 1986 when the situation exploded. 'Ali Nasir Muhammad was abroad on an official visit where he was accompanied by the deputy defense minister and the chief of general staff. When he returned to Aden from his trip abroad, he asked about the exercise, and he was told, "Didn't you hear

about the Israeli threats against Aden? Israel made threats against Aden because there are Palestinians in the country." 'Ali Nasir most certainly did not buy that excuse; he had served as defense minister for years, and it was self-evident that an airplane attack would be rebuffed by M-T guns, not by tanks. What heightened 'Ali Nasir's suspicions and placed him and his supporters in the party in a state of anticipation is the fact that the tanks were deployed outside the camps for a long time. They were stationed around the airport, around the Central Committee Building, the Broadcast Building, the Security Building, the President's Office and the Ministry of Defense.

Just as elections for the congress were conducted under the threat of weapons, 'Ali 'Antar and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il demanded that Central Committee meetings and Political Bureau meetings also be held under the threat of weapons. Information available to 'Ali Nasir indicated that 'Ali 'Antar, 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il and their supporters would take advantage of a Central Committee meeting to create disturbances if all their demands were not adopted. Furthermore, he was assured by some sources that there was an agreement between 'Abd-al-Fattah and 'Ali 'Antar on how they were going to seize power and distribute positions. According to this information 'Abd-al-Fattah was to take over the party's secretariat, 'Ali 'Antar was to take over the presidency, and 'Ali Nasir was to be removed and eliminated.

'Ali Nasir did everything he could to postpone a meeting of the Central Committee. He wanted to provide an opportunity for both parties to reach a mutually acceptable compromise through contacts and dialogue. He did not want to make any decision under threat. Instead, he preferred that conditions improve so that everyone would have a chance. Upon his return from a trip to Addis Ababa, Bulgaria and San'a' in which he was accompanied by 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, he called a meeting of the Political Bureau on 9 January 1986. At that time Aden was teeming with delegations from communist parties involved in a desperate attempt to defuse the situation. Some Yemeni officials relate that George Hawi, secretary general of the Lebanese Communist Party, visited 'Ali 'Antar in his office before the meeting and asked him, "The Political Bureau will be meeting tomorrow. What will you ask of 'Ali Nasir Muhammad?" 'Ali 'Antar replied, "We will ask him to remove Abu Bakr Badhib from his position as secretary of the Organizational Department so that 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il can serve in that capacity. We will also ask him to remove 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Qadir from his position as the official responsible for foreign relations so that Salim Salih Muhammad can serve in that position." 'Ali 'Antar then added a statement which shows to a large extent the nature of his view of the party's unity. He said, "We are proposing for these positions historical figures whose competence cannot be compared with the competence of those we are asking 'Ali Nasir to remove."

It is worth noting here that 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Qadir and Abu Bakr Badhib come from political factions--communists and Ba'thists--who had organized the Yemeni Socialist Party in 1978. Like other leaders of the National Front, however, 'Ali 'Antar continued to believe that the unity of the party had to be superficial. He thought the historical leaders of the Arab Nationalists Movement should remain in control.

George Hawi asked, "And what if 'Ali Nasir refused to accept your demands?" 'Ali 'Antar replied, "He will leave by force."

The Political Bureau's meeting was held on the morning of 9 January 1986. The topic of distributing the functions of the permanent secretariat was not brought up for discussion. 'Ali Nasir noticed that the atmosphere around him was threatening and that he was being compelled to accept the other party's demands. Accepting those demands would mean in effect the end of 'Ali Nasir. For example, 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il presented a 15-point agenda which would cut off 'Ali Nasir's power completely and bring the activity of his supporters to a standstill. Some of these points were:

--Elections for popular organizations would be suspended, and the parties would try instead to find a compromise that would satisfy both parties.

--Run-off elections would be held in a number of party organizations because some elements had forfeited the election, and that was contrary to the controls which had been endorsed by the Political Bureau after the election was completed.

--A group of leaders who had engaged in terrorist practices in support organizations and had led armed demonstrations would be asked to account for their actions.

--The secretary general was accused of delaying the business of party organizations.

These points were set forth by 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il in his capacity as secretary of the General Department. They were confirmed in advance by 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, 'Ali 'Antar, and Salih Muntasir al-Masili [sic?]. 'Ali Nasir was told that a solution to these problems had to be reached before distribution of the secretariat functions could be discussed. 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il was undoubtedly acting with the intelligence of someone who had mastered the art of partisan maneuvers. If he could be certain that 'Ali Nasir would be condemned and blamed before the secretariat functions were distributed, he would then be able to impose the distribution of tasks he wanted without coming up against any resistance to speak of from 'Ali Nasir or his supporters. However, the meeting lasted for 6 hours, and nothing was accomplished. The meeting was then adjourned and it was to be reconvened on 13 January 1986.

Eyewitnesses in Aden are saying that armed elements, some of whom were brought into the capital on civilian jeeps, fanned out in the area surrounding the Central Committee Building awaiting instructions to carry out an operation of some sort. The armed men had come into the capital on the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th of the month. The atmosphere was tense, and tanks were scattered on the beaches and at the entrances to the capital city. Homes were full of armed men, and threats made by 'Ali 'Antar's people were brought to the attention of 'Ali Nasir Muhammad's supporters.

On Saturday 11 January 'Ali Nasir and a few of his colleagues attended the funeral of Zahrah Hibah Allah, Sultan Ahmad 'Umar's wife. She had been a fighter in what used to be the Arab Nationalists Movement. It was noticed that none of the leaders who were siding with 'Ali 'Antar and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il were at the funeral. This was contrary to their usual custom on such occasions. Salih Muslih was late for the funeral, arriving after the funeral party arrived at the

gravesite and while the burial was underway. Then he left in a hurry. But 'Ali Nasir was there, looking around and protecting people. According to one Palestinian leader, however, he too was not himself. Suddenly, one of his guards approached him and whispered something in his ear. 'Ali Nasir's reply was, "You have to be patient." It was later learned that a conspiracy had been planned to assassinate 'Ali Nasir at the cemetery, but the conspiracy was uncovered in the last moments. And that was why Salih Muslih left the cemetery in a hurry before the dead woman was buried.

Despite this tense atmosphere, contacts and deliberations continued before the meeting of the Political Bureau, and there were several meetings between George Hawi, 'Ali 'Antar and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il which lasted until a late hour of the night. During those meetings George Hawi suggested that the Political Bureau meeting be postponed until deliberations to find peaceful solutions to the crisis which posed the threat of a breakup or a breakdown can be completed. Hawi asked that the meeting be postponed for another month and that George Habash and others participate in that meeting. However, 'Ali 'Antar and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il turned down that suggestion outright. They insisted that the meeting be held, and 'Ali 'Antar even told George Hawi, "Tell your friend," (he was referring to 'Ali Nasir Muhammad) "that if he does not want to accept our demands, we will force him to accept them."

'Ali Nasir and his group were doing their part and contacting other parties to defuse the situation. On the evening of 13 January Muhammad 'Ali Ahmad, member of the Central Committee, met with Salih Muslih to persuade him to agree to postponing the meeting, but Salih Muslih too insisted that the meeting be held on 13 January 1986. The reason for the determination to hold the meeting so soon was most likely so that matters can be decided and settled quickly.

Despite the other party's insistence, 'Ali Nasir did not give up. He went in person to the home of Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas who was getting ready to head a delegation that was going to India. 'Ali Nasir asked al-'Attas to persuade the others that postponing the meeting was necessary until an agreement on everything could be reached. Despite all these efforts, the other party continued to insist that the meeting be held as scheduled. 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il, 'Ali 'Antar and Salih Muslih were well aware that postponing the meeting of the Political Bureau for 1 month meant that the Central Committee meeting would be held before that of the Political Bureau. As far as principle was concerned, it is the party's bylaws and regulations that determine the powers of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee, and it is the Central Committee that is duly qualified to distribute the functions of the secretariat. They knew that, and they knew that bringing up any such subjects at a Central Committee meeting would not be to their advantage. That is why they were anxious to hold the meeting on 13 January. They wanted to contrive a problem and create an explosion early, before the Central Committee meeting which was to be held in a matter of days.

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[Part Four: "The Volcano Erupts"]

[Text] The tanks which moved out on the morning of 13 January carried pictures of 'Ali Nasir to hide their intent. When a police commander became suspicious and tried to file a report, he was shot.

The homes of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il, 'Ali 'Antar and 'Ali Shayi' were used as strategic positions during the battles.

On the fourth day of the incidents 'Ali Nasir's group contacted the Soviet Union and requested Soviet assistance, but Moscow turned down their request.

"The people of Yemen are offering you their sensitive hearts and their yielding spirits. They are believers, and they are wise."

I recall the prophet's words as I roam the streets of Aden looking for that city's soul after the conflict. I wonder, how did the volcano erupt? How did the bloodshed come about? What is the reason for all this resentment? The official account could no longer answer those questions. The tragedy is too great to be glossed over by the media, and its impact and effects on people are still being felt today by hundreds of political prisoners and hundreds awaiting execution. They are the ones who are paying the price for the conflict between people in senior positions.

In light of the previous installments which dealt with the background of the conflict and my assessment of the reasons behind it, talking about the beginning from the beginning becomes difficult. On 13 January 1986 the violence that was used to deal with the crisis was a logical outcome of prevailing conditions that came somewhat late. A grey and towering mountain of iron rose in the middle of the ocean and separated Aden from the world. It made what was happening in Aden a mystery whose details and implications those of us outside Aden would find difficult to comprehend. In Aden a person feels isolated from what is taking place on the other side of the mountain. A person feels that he can do anything: he can even move mountains by telling them to move. Aden is a remote spot on the map and it is remote in a dream.

On 13 January 1986 we in AL-TADAMUN's London office, like many other journalists in the world, were faced with a momentous incident and a painful disaster. The news was conflicting and mystifying. News agencies would report one account, and in a few moments another news agency would contradict it. One journalist would believe that he had the true story, and then the incidents would get ahead of his true account. From our offices we tried to contact Aden, but there was no answer at the telephone numbers we dialed. Later when I was visiting Aden, I realized that some of those people we had tried to contact had been killed. Some of them, like the colleague Zaki Barakat, the writer, poet and editor-in-chief of the party's newspaper AL-THAWRI, had been cut into pieces there on that rock near the sea. I recently interviewed some of the politicians we had wanted to talk with to find out from them what had really happened. I interviewed some of them in San'a' and a few others in Aden.

No matter how horrifying a picture Arab and western media projected about the incidents in Aden, something continues to be missing from that picture because what really happened was even more bitter. To avoid having a second tragedy occur in this country which is dear to our hearts, let us tell officials today in Aden and outside Aden: "It is up to you to restore the cohesiveness of Yemeni society which has been destroyed. You have to look at the issue without a vengeful spirit. You have to look for political solutions to your problems. You must know that bloodshed will bring about more bloodshed and that Yemen is large enough for everybody. You have to remember what the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him salvation told you."

After considerable effort spent between San'a', Aden and Cairo and after conducting several interviews with officials who were in power or in exile, I was able to reconstruct the incidents and the reasons for them.

On the morning of 13 January 1986--and let time stop here briefly--the meeting of the Political Bureau was to be held at 9:30 a.m. Despite attempts made by intermediaries, colleagues and fellow Yemenis to postpone that meeting so that reconciliation can be achieved, 'Ali 'Antar and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il and those who sided with them refused to postpone the meeting. 'Ali Salim al-Bayd affirms that postponing the meeting was being sought to interfere with the functions of party organizations, thereby providing an opportunity for more maneuvers. But 'Ali Nasir thinks that we were pressing for a postponement to give our colleagues more time to deliberate and discuss matters so that political solutions could be achieved. The meeting of the Political Bureau was actually held, and four of its members arrived at the Central Committee Building. They are 'Ali 'Antar, 'Ali Shayi' Hadi, 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il and 'Ali Salim al-Bayd.

That was how the cycle of terror started. 'Abdallah 'Ali 'Ulaywah, who was then chief of staff said, "I got a phone call in my office at the Ministry of Defense at approximately 8 a.m. I was told that tanks had moved out of Salah-al-Din Camp, which is located 40 kilometers from the capital near the suburb of al-Bariqah. I found it strange that tanks would be on the move at 7:30 a.m. for no reason. I tried to contact Salih Muslih, minister of defense, but I was not able to reach him. His wife told me that he had already left to go to the meeting of the Political Bureau. I tried to contact him in the Central Committee, but I was told that he had not arrived yet. Then I called Haytham Qasim, commander of the tank corps, and I asked him to have the tanks return to their position. He told me that he could not do that because the tanks had spread out and that it would be difficult to have them return. I asked him to board a tank and issue orders from that tank to the remaining tanks, and he told me he would try. Most certainly, however, he did not, and I did not have the effective means to stop those tanks. So I contacted navy commander Ahmad 'Abdallah to ask him if he knew whether or not an exercise was underway or why tanks were moving in the city. But he told me that he had no knowledge of any such thing. Then I contacted Ahmad 'Abdallah because I knew that the navy had units near the training field where the Central School for Navy Missiles was located. Ahmad 'Abdallah asked me if I had received a specific report about that at staff headquarters. But we did not have a specific report that the tanks were engaged in a training exercise that day.

"The tanks thus proceeded to move towards Aden. They were raising the picture of 'Ali Nasir to hide their intent. As they crossed al-Bariqah Bridge, Police Commander 'Ali Salih Bahbib became suspicious when he noticed there were many tanks. He tried to contact staff headquarters from his post, but while he was making his telephone call, one of his assistants, whose name is al-Maflahi, shot him. Then the police commander's guards shot al-Maflahi. When al-Maflahi's pockets were searched, a piece of paper was found bearing the names of party members from 'Ali Nasir's group in the area of al-Bariqah who were to be eliminated.

"Staff headquarters was contacted immediately, and the news was reported to 'Ulaywah while Muhammad 'Ali Ahmad, the governor of Abyan and member of the Central Committee was receiving a telephone call in his car informing him about the al-Bariqah incident. He headed immediately to 'Ali Nasir's home. George Hawi, secretary of the Lebarese Communist Party had informed 'Ali Nasir in the evening what 'Ali 'Antar had told him about the possibility of using weapons. Muhammad 'Ali Ahmad advised the party's secretary general not to go to the meeting. He also advised that other members of the bureau who support 'Ali Nasir's position stay away from the meeting until the truth about the military activity became clear. The tanks had arrived at the television building, and they had surrounded it. Their guns were aimed at the broadcast room. At the same time other tanks were surrounding the military and civilian airport, the Central Committee, and the Ministry of Defense. Events later showed that these tanks did not have to go back to their positions to refuel or get a fresh supply of ammunition since warehouses for these tanks had been prepared in advance at various locations.

"That was how the incidents which took us by surprise started."

That is what Ahmad 'Abdallah, navy commander told me. I asked him, "With all the preparations that were being made in Aden and after what George Hawi said, did you not have advance information that the other party might take military action?"

He replied, "We had our suspicions. We had met in the evening, and we were all very tense. We had considered the situation and discussed it amongst ourselves. 'Ali 'Antar's group was determined that the meeting be held, and despite the mediation and the contacts, they refused to have it postponed. We agreed that 'Ali Nasir should not go to the meeting of the Political Bureau because we were afraid there might be a plan to eliminate him during the meeting. We decided that his car would be sent to the meeting under guard and that if shots were fired at the car, two navy and state security groups would break into the Political Bureau.

"And 'Ali Nasir's car was actually sent to the meeting at about 9:30. As soon as it passed the gate at the Central Committee Building, 'Ali 'Antar's and Salih Muslih's guards started shooting at it. And as soon as 'Ali Nasir's group heard the sounds of gunfire, they broke into the room where the Political Bureau was meeting and shot those who were in it. That was how the volcano erupted. The bullets that were fired into the meeting room by the guards had hit 'Ali 'Antar, 'Ali Shayi' Hadi and Salih Muslih. But 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il and 'Ali Salim al-Bayd managed to hide in a room inside the building. While members of the

Political Bureau were exchanging gunfire with the guards, another battle was going on outside the building. Guards for 'Ali 'Antar, Salih Muslih and Salim al-Bayd were engaged in a battle with guards for 'Ali Nasir who were outside the building where the meeting was to be held."

The bullets that were fired at the Central Committee marked the onset of the most violent and the swiftest civil war the world has experienced in the latter quarter of the 20th century. Eyewitnesses who experienced the early terrifying hours of those incidents affirm that minutes after the sounds of gunfire came out of the Central Committee building, guns were fired from the homes of members of the Political Bureau. The gunfire was directed against the naval base, particularly against 'Ali 'Antar's home. It is worth noting that the homes of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il, 'Ali 'Antar, 'Ali Shayi' and Salih Muslih are located in the area of al-Tawahi. These are homes that overlook the sea and occupy strategic positions. It seems that residents had been evacuated from these homes 1 week earlier, and armed men then occupied them. This opinion is confirmed by the fact that concentrated shelling of these homes by naval forces over a 9-day period did not result in any casualties among the children or women living in those homes. When I visited 'Ali 'Antar's home when I was in Aden, I noticed that the destruction to the home had been limited. Tariq, 'Ali 'Antar's son assured me that the house was protected. His father's supporters had joined him and his brother in defending the house. When I asked him if those supporters had come to the house before the battle started, he said "They most certainly did." His mother, however, denied that. She said that she was alone in the house when shots were fired from the office of the Central Committee. She said that she was on the roof trying to hang the laundry when she heard the sounds of gunfire. Fatimah 'Ali 'Antar emphasized that she was taken completely by surprise when the conflict began.

It is now certain that the homes of three members of the Political Bureau, 'Ali 'Antar, 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il, and 'Ali Shayi' Hadi, were used as strategic positions in the fighting. It is also certain--at least in the first few moments after the battle started--that the people who lived in those homes had left. That explains how none of the children was hurt.

Quite early that day sharp divisions were already taking place within the ranks of all military sectors except the navy. Ahmad 'Abdallah, a young, 39-year old officer who was brilliant and extremely intelligent was commanding the naval forces. His name used to inspire much fear and much pride in Aden before the incidents. This young officer had joined the British Royal Naval Academy from which he graduated 2 years later. He then enlisted in the army. A short time later he realized that he had to add to his military knowledge, so he applied for a scholarship to the Soviet Union where he spent 2 years. When he returned he modernized the navy. During the time he was responsible for the navy, he gained an excellent reputation. When I interviewed him in San'a' after I returned from Aden, I asked him why had his troops engaged in such brutal shelling of the homes of members of the Political Bureau. I asked him, "Why was there so much destruction, which, I have been told, the naval forces were responsible for?"

He replied, "I returned the fire; I did not start it."

I asked, "Did you have an advance plan that was advantageous to 'Ali Nasir, and did that plan begin with assassinating members of the Political Bureau and end by eliminating their supporters?"

It seems that my question got to him. We were having lunch then and our host was a southern official. Ahmad 'Abdallah declined to answer my question at that time, but the following day he brought maps and documents to the hotel, and he laid them out in front of me and proceeded to explain and to affirm that in the beginning he had no plan. [He said], "Had there been a plan, I would not have allowed the tanks to go through the gate at the navy base. A tank had gone beyond half the entrance to the base after gunshots were fired from the homes surrounding the Ministry of Defense. Light and medium weapons, like Dushkas and Russian machine guns, were used. I tried to give orders to return the fire, but that was not easy. Forty-five minutes were needed to prepare the combat vessels, and during that period we were completely paralyzed. I was thus forced to use the units I had on Mount Marbat as I waited for the boats to be prepared. I had to do that to protect them. I was afraid these boats might malfunction while they were still docked because of the intense shelling that we were faced with."

One hour after the battle started, the navy commander received a message stating that tanks had been deployed in al-Jant. He was told the tanks had broken into navy camps there and that a fierce battle was underway. Meanwhile some tanks had moved towards Aden through Madinat al-Sha'b, al-Mansurah, and al-Shaykh 'Uthman. At the same time track-laying vehicles were proceeding on their way to Abyan in accordance with an advance plan. The tanks were not the only vehicles that were moving; personnel carriers were also surrounding Aden Hotel to control the crossroads. Then a group from the force which was being carried by the tanks moved in to occupy (Crater), al-Ma'la, al-Tawahi, the Secretariat of the Central Committee, the Ministry of Defense, and the Radio and Television Building. At approximately 12 o'clock noon the navy commander tried to send groups of men armed with automatic RPG's to fight the tanks in al-Tawahi, where 20 new tanks in reinforcements had been received. He also tried to send men to the site of the naval police, to the Central Committee and to the crossroads of al-Fath Camp.

Fierce fighting continued until the morning of the following day. The information affirmed that more than 10,000 armed men had come from Lahaj, al-Dali', Radfan and Yafa'i and had spread out in the city after it was announced that four members of the Political Bureau had been executed. The fact that those men had spread out in the city was no coincidence; nor was it a reaction. It most certainly happened according to a pre-set plan. Had there been no plan, people would have been restless and disorderly under similar conditions, and there would have been a state of chaos preventing them from getting to a designated place. Officials in Aden are saying, "We did not have a plan at all." However, people in Lahaj, al-Dali', Radfan, and in the capital rushed to defend the party and the revolution when they heard the communique, which was announced by 'Ali Nasir, announcing that four leaders had been executed. But Ahmad Musa'id who was minister of state security during 'Ali Nasir's days was accused by those who are in power in Aden of being behind the disturbances and of being more responsible for what happened than 'Ali Nasir Muhammad was. Ahmad Musa'id sent me a letter in which he answered the questions I had put to him about the plan for the battle. I had asked him those questions when I met him after my return from Aden.

Ahmad Musa'id had this to say in his letter about the question of a military plan or the military command: "Everything that has been said and is being said on that point has nothing to do with the truth and lacks the simplest facts. If we did have a plan and a military command for the incidents, why is it that the other party has not published details about such a plan? The business about spreading false stories is nothing but slanderous. Any military plan has to be comprehensive, and it has to concentrate on the most important branches and units which are to carry it out: the tank corps, artillery, the air force, and the infantry. These are the forces and the branches of the armed forces that would be relied upon in carrying out an offensive or a defensive military plan. But what has been said about the naval forces' plan is what no civilian or military person can believe. What is true in this regard is that after the situation erupted, every one of the feuding parties took action. Everyone gave commands and directions; everyone issued orders and instructions from his professional, political and military position. That is natural and legitimate for both parties, particularly since the conflict is a long one and its forces and parties are quite clearly defined. The difference between us and that junta" (he was referring to the Aden group) "is that we faced the explosive situation without a plan; we did not have a unified military command. We relied on fighters who are members of the party, and we relied on individuals from the military establishments. We also relied on the masses and on light weapons. But they relied on military plans which they had tried and tested earlier in 1984 and in May 1985. They also relied on top political and military leaders and on secondary and reserve leaders who would replace the top leaders in case something should happen to the top leaders. And they did actually carry out their plan."

On the second and third days after the incidents broke out, tanks were no longer rolling into the capital because they had suffered losses. About 154 tanks had been destroyed by the party's militia and by the naval forces on the first day of the fighting. But instead of the tanks, reserve forces from the Fifth Brigade entered the capital on the side of 'Ali 'Antar's and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's group. That force came from Kharz, a desert area near Aden, approximately 60 kilometers to the west. Now that we have a military analysis of the outcome, it is believed that it was that brigade which decided the battle. This is because tank corps units and battalions from the First Brigade had suffered tremendous losses which they could neither repair nor replace. So they were forced to call reserve tanks from the command of the western center (on the borders with north Yemen). These tanks were brought into Aden to cover the tank losses.

On the fifth and sixth days of the fighting the situation in Aden was as follows: the city was enveloped in darkness, and water service had been interrupted because the power station, water tanks and the Caltex area had been shelled by 152 and 130 caliber artillery guns. City residents have much to say now about these atrocious incidents. Tanks were driven over cars which happened to lie in their path. They did not even swerve a little to avoid them. Corpses lay in the streets, and fires were burning in oil tanks. People were being killed because of who they were and of where they were born. Today, some of the details about this war are causing extreme pain and bitterness in the hearts of Yemeni citizens. When asked by visitors about their feelings and how much they suffered during the days of the war, Aden residents say, "We don't want to remember. The war took away our sense of stability and security. It destroyed what was flourishing and what was not."

The fighting in Aden continued until the seventh day. On the fourth day of the fighting 'Ali Nasir's group contacted the Soviet Union to request assistance, but the Soviet Union's answer was negative. Those who were in 'Ali Nasir's group were extremely embittered by that, but 'Ali Nasir himself and those around him refused to talk about it. In fact, when asked about the Soviets' position, they say, "The Soviet Union did everything it could to effect a reconciliation before the incidents broke out, just as George Habash, Nayif Hawatiman and George Hawi had done. However, reason was absent, and resentment made everyone blind."

But did Moscow actually decide early what its position toward 'Ali Nasir was to be?

So far, information on this subject has not been confirmed, but those who were in Aden and who were in contact with Soviet experts who, like others, were taken by surprise when the fighting and the violence began, or those who were engaged in talks inside the Soviet Embassy affirm that the Soviets' position was one of maximum confusion. Politically, the Soviets had been on 'Ali Nasir's side until 4 a.m. Thursday, the fourth day. But they refused to intervene militarily even though they had received, via their military experts and their embassy in Khur Maksar, a cassette tape recorded by 'Ali Nasir asking for their assistance. It seems that the Soviets' answer to 'Ali Nasir was to tell him to go to Moscow by way of Addis Ababa. In Moscow he would meet with 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il and come to an understanding with him about a solution. When 'Ali Nasir withdrew to the north from Abyan and requested an airplane to take him to Addis Ababa and from there to Moscow, Col 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih provided an airplane that was to take him and a few party leaders who had left the country with him to Addis Ababa. There he waited for a Soviet airplane to take him to Moscow, but the airplane was delayed. He was then told that the airplane had been delayed by a technical malfunction. Finally, he was told that a mistake had been made and that he had not been invited to come to Moscow. He was then told that he would be welcome in Sofia. 'Ali Nasir then understood that he would not be welcome in Moscow, not even as a political refugee.

A number of Soviet experts had been killed while the fighting was going on in the streets of Aden. Among them was a senior officer with a general's rank who had been an adviser to the Ministry of Defense. Although Soviet vessels were carrying the citizens of other foreign countries out of the country, they refused to rescue groups of 'Ali Nasir Muhammad's supporters who had been under siege. Did the Soviet Union decide early in this conflict to side with the group opposing 'Ali Nasir?

After making a careful study of the incidents and after interviewing some of those who were engaged in talks at the Soviet Embassy during a 5-day period, I can say--with much caution--that the Soviets were totally confused as a result of the fact that matters in Aden were confused and confusing. The Soviet Union was still supporting 'Ali Nasir until the third day of the incidents. And that explains why PRAVDA came out on the second day with a headline which read "Five Reactionary Leaders Executed." PRAVDA was referring to 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il, 'Ali 'Antar, 'Ali Shayi', 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, (they had not yet heard that he had escaped death) and Salih Muslih. But as the course of the battle changed, so did the situation. A few officials in Aden affirm that at 7 p.m. on the first

day of the battle, 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, the current secretary general of the party, and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il managed to contact the Soviet Embassy from the Central Committee Building. 'Abd-al-Fattah personally spoke with the ambassador who asked him to come to the embassy where they could consider the situation. And two tanks were actually sent to take 'Ali Salim al-Bayd and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il to the embassy. However, the tank which 'Ali Salim al-Bayd took went to al-Fath camp, but the second tank, which carried 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il, was completely destroyed in front of the gate of the naval base. The Soviets did not know that 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il had been killed, and they continued to believe that he was somewhere leading the battle.

On the third day of the incidents 'Ali 'Antar's and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's group contacted Muhammad (Katamtu), also known as Abu Faras, representative of the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine in Aden, and they asked him to serve on the committee that will be engaged in talks at the Soviet Embassy to bring about a cease fire between the two parties. The negotiating committee was thus formed inside the embassy, and that committee was made up of Sulayman Nasir Mas'ud, member of the party's Central Committee and president of the Popular Defense Organization; 'Abdallah al-Baytani, minister of interior and candidate for the Central Committee. Mr al-Baytani was representing 'Ali Nasir Muhammad's group. The other party was represented by Muhammad 'Abdallah (Muhsin al-Shurbaji), minister of housing and one of the men close to 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il, and by ibn Husaynun, a military commander who is now minister of energy and minerals. In 5 days of continuous talks a cease-fire agreement was reached scores of times, but it was also broken scores of times.

It is said that when the Soviet ambassador in Aden then, Ambassador Zukov, received news that a Soviet general, who had been adviser to the Ministry of Defense had been killed, he sent a telegram to Moscow which stated, "What is happening here is indescribable. All kinds of crimes have been committed. It is this that is forcing me to withdraw in the next few hours." At the same time the experts' families, like all families in Aden, were living under extremely harsh conditions and a number of Soviet personnel were under siege in military establishments. After Zukov sent that telegram to his government, he resumed the talks with the committee. When he sensed that the talks were going nowhere and the two parties were insisting on their positions, he told them, "As a representative of the Soviet Union, I feel ashamed because my people are dying in the streets and you are unable to reach an agreement. You may have no respect for the lives of your people, but I respect the lives of my people."

Three Soviet military vessels had been docked not far from the naval base, but they had stayed far away and had not become involved in the fighting. This indicates that the Soviets had decided not to intervene on either side even if they had been asked to do so. The families of Soviet experts left Aden with foreign nationals, but several Soviet experts stayed behind at military sites until the last day of the war, refusing to intervene in the fighting even though Minister of Interior 'Abdallah al-Baytani had asked them to do something to stop the battle.

Some of the information I obtained in Aden confirms that following developments which occurred on the third and fourth days of the fighting and after missiles were deployed, which resulted in fires that burned the Police Academy Building,

the Engineering Department at the navy base, and the (Tox) Vessels Slip Department, Soviet experts tried to blow up the weapons depots in Jabal al-Hadid so that neither party would use those weapons. The madness of the war had led to rocket launchers being used on the first day of the fighting.

As far as the air force was concerned, much was said about its role in deciding the battle. It was said that the air force was on 'Ali Nasir Muhammad's side. However, the fact that tanks controlled the airport at an early time paralyzed the air force and got it out of the battle from the very first moments of the fighting. How true is that statement?

Information I obtained while I was in Aden and San'a' enables me to say that on the first day of the fighting Air Force Commander Maj Ahmad Husayn Musa had not yet decided what his position would be. According to some of those who accompanied him during the early hours of the incidents, he was one man when he was with 'Ali Nasir and another man when he was with 'Ali 'Antar. But the air force was divided on the first day of the fighting. The air base was in al-'Amad, and the Ninth Brigade was fighting with 'Ali 'Antar. But the Fifth Brigade and the nearby air base were on 'Ali Nasir's side. However, the Tenth Brigade (helicopters) and the First Brigade (anti-aircraft) were divided; they did not become involved in the battle when the Fifth Formation, which is stationed in Aden, carried out a strong air raid against the tanks which had fanned out between Salah-al-Din Camp and al-Shaykh 'Uthman. The Fifth Formation also bombed the air base in (al-'And).

On the second day of the fighting the Ninth Brigade, which was supporting 'Ali 'Antar, managed to deal a crippling blow to Aden Airport and the air force command. It was that which decided the air force's position in favor of 'Ali 'Antar's group at an early time. It may be said that the navy was the only branch of the military which held together and fought till the last day of the battle on 'Ali Nasir Muhammad's side. This is due to the fact that Ahmad 'Abdallah, commander of the navy (from Abyan) had decided on his position early. In fact, he had decided on his position in 1982 when the conflict started. About this matter Ahmad 'Abdallah says, "I decided that my position should be with 'Ali Nasir because I cannot support the ignorance and backwardness which 'Ali 'Antar represented. He had tried to win me over more than once. He had asked me to eliminate 'Ali Nasir, and he told me that in return I would get the Ministry of Defense or command of the general staff. But I refused because I was convinced that 'Ali Nasir represents the proper partisan position." However, Ahmad 'Abdallah's early, firm position was rare. A number of the leaders of other branches of the military wavered until the last moments. They even wavered during the battle. The navy, however, fought until the last day when 'Ali Nasir's instructions were relayed to them to withdraw because the other party was determined to destroy the city. So Ahmad 'Abdallah withdrew with some of his guards from al-Tawahi where the naval base is located. He withdrew to Tariq Camp in Khur Maksar which was under the control of the deputy chief of staff for supplies and provisions, Lt Col 'Abd-Rabbuh Maqsud Hadi. From there he went to Abyan in a small boat. Then he left with 'Ali Nasir when 'Ali Nasir left to go to San'a' and Addis Ababa. All the navy vessels followed him there where they stayed in Ethiopian waters until talks were later conducted between Addis Ababa and Aden for their return. Talks were also held to allow Democratic Yemen's airline (ALIMDA) to use Ethiopian air space after a period during which those

airplanes had not been allowed to fly in Ethiopia's air space. Nevertheless, Ethiopia's position is still one that supports 'Ali Nasir, just as Syria, Libya and Algeria do. These countries are asking the regime in Aden to reach a political solution with 'Ali Nasir and his forces and those who left the country with him. This is the preliminary condition that has been set to normalizing relations with them.

'Ali Nasir had withdrawn to Abyan to follow the situation from there. He made more than one attempt to curb the awesome violence which had been unleashed without any controls, but his attempts failed. Neither party could control the situation. Northerners (Dr Aryani, minister of foreign affairs) affirm that 'Ali Nasir contacted them through the minister of health on the fourth day of the fighting to thank them for not interfering. This is contrary to what was rumored that forces from the north were making preparations with Palestinian forces to intervene on 'Ali Nasir's side, but the Soviet Union warned them and prevented them from taking action. On the last day of the fighting, which lasted 9 days, 'Ali Nasir withdrew to the north, and a number of his staff leaders withdrew with him. There he told officials that he would go to Ethiopia and from there to Moscow. The Soviets had suggested that he go to Moscow and convene a meeting of the Political Bureau there, but that did not happen, and matters were decided in Aden in favor of 'Ali 'Antar's and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's group.

Since the second day of the fighting information about what happened to 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il has been contradictory. Some people assert that he withdrew outside Aden to lead the resistance. Others assert that he was killed when the tank in which he was a passenger was hit in front of the navy building. None of the passengers on that tank came out alive. With conflicting news and rumors, the death of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il remains one of the stories that will have an effect on the future of relations between members of the political leadership in Aden. 'Abd-al-Fattah's wife and daughters are still refusing to accept condolences. They say that if he was in fact killed in the tank, why is it that none of his effects, like his watch, for example, or the metal wire that was in his thigh from a surgical operation, has been found? His teeth were not found either although the remains of soldiers who were with him in the same tank were found. What adds to the mystery of this matter is that the driver of that tank managed to survive. He still affirms that 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il left the tank with him and that he was alive, but he does not know what happened to him after that.

Muhammad 'Ali Ahmad, the governor of Abyan assured me in San'a' that the story about 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's death was quite different. He told me, "'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il was not killed in a tank in front of the naval base as has been rumored. He was killed by his colleagues, Sa'id Salih and Salim Salih. Salim Salih had stated more than once that when he arrived at the gate of the Central Committee and heard the sound of gunfire, he went back to Sa'id Salih's house, which was nearby, to consider the situation. They stayed in the house till 4:30 when Sultan Ahmad 'Umar contacted them to tell them that two tanks had been sent to get 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il and 'Ali Salim al-Bayd out of the Central Committee Building. At 7:30 p.m. one of the tanks entered the Central Committee and took 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il to the Financial Department at the Ministry of Defense where he was eliminated in the cellar on 22 January. An official announcement was then made that he had been burned inside the tank."

But why would 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, Salim Salih, and Sa'id Salih eliminate 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il? They were allies, and they had faced death together.

Muhammad 'Ali Ahmad says, "Those people were afraid that if 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il survived, he would seize power because of his influence inside the country and abroad. Salim Salih, al-Bayd and Sa'id Salih would then have to be sent away after all the dust had settled. That is why the three men agreed to eliminate 'Abd-al-Fattah in the Ministry of Defense and to share power. The Ministry of Defense went to the al-Dali' tribe (Salih 'Ubayd); the Ministry of State Security went to Radfan tribe (Sa'id Salih); and the Ministry of Interior fell to the lot of the tribes of Hadramawt: its minister is Salih Munassir al-Siyayli.

"The party's general secretariat in Hadramawt was given to 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, and the position of assistant secretary general for Yafa'i was given to Salim Salih. The agreement to distribute these positions was made before 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il was executed."

Contrary to that story which I heard from Muhammad 'Ali Ahmad, Salim Salih, assistant secretary general, had assured me in Aden that 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il had been killed inside the tank in front of the navy building. Nevertheless, we reopened the investigation into his death.

No one knows exactly where 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il was killed: in the tank or elsewhere. But he is certainly gone. If he were alive, as some of his supporters in Aden are saying, he would have surfaced during the last few months, or some trace of him would have appeared.

The most violent civil war of the last quarter of the 20th century thus came to an end. Given all the foregoing details, the lingering question is this: Who started this? It is a stupid question which may be answered in a number of conflicting ways. What is certain is that each party pushed the other to the brink. If Aden's rulers today believe that it was 'Ali Nasir who started this civil war, then they are wrong. They started it themselves through the practice of violence which has been consolidated and fostered since independence. It was the tool they used to settle their disputes ever since Qahtan al-Sha'bi; they used it with Faysal 'Abd-al-Latif, Salimin and Salih Muti'. A few of the historical leaders who are still living may recall that Salimin had gone home after resigning under threat. The Central Committee meeting then went on, and in five minutes Salimin was tried in absentia and sentenced to die. Then 'Ali Shayi' himself went to Salimin's house and carried out his execution. If this story about Salimin's death is true, and it is a story that was related to me by a former official who was close to Salimin, then the death of 'Ali Shayi' Hadi in the Political Bureau confirms the common saying which states "The truth about a murder will become known even after some time."

Who started all this and who didn't? These are questions which may not be asked today because everyone was involved in starting the trouble. Everyone now has a historical responsibility to restore peace and solidarity to Yemeni society.

The question that is being asked in Aden today is this: After the incidents that happened, is the experiment with its current characteristics likely to survive? Are the basic conditions for a democratic revolution and for a shift to socialism available in Yemen? Is there an intention to go back and check what is required from all parties? Will the analytical document which will be presented to the party's congress in Aden in June 1987 about the tragedy of 13 January be handled objectively and rationally, or will what happened be considered the work of foreign intelligence agencies, enemies of the revolution, and worldwide imperialism?

Aden will wake up tomorrow to look for its soul. The ocean is silent, and Jabal al-Hadid is not revealing its secrets. Which way will you turn, Aden?

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CSO: 4404/367

RAFSANJANI ELABORATES ON U.S. EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH CONTACT

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 13 May 87 p 17

[Interview with Speaker of the Majlis Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani by British correspondent Tim Holdin; date and place not specified]

[Text] Political service

In an interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the speaker of the Majlis, Tim Holdin, the British correspondent who recently visited Iran, asked his views about the U.S. efforts to establish relations with Iran, the Iran-Iraq war, support for liberation movements, and so on.

What follows is the complete text of this interview, which was placed at the disposal of KEYHAN by the public relations office of the Majlis.

Tim Holdin: At the time when I was preparing a film and report on your speech at the Friday prayers, I felt that you were somewhat disappointed about the severance of relations between Iran and the United States. Does this disappointment still continue?

Hashemi-Rafsanjani: There have never been any relations. There was an effort on the part of the Americans to establish relations, which failed, and we were not disappointed either.

British correspondent: Is it true that for some time, they have tried to establish relations with the Islamic Republic? Even certain sources in Europe say that four years ago, that is, in 1983, Murphy and an American general came to Iran to establish relations. Is there any truth to such claims concerning the Americans?

Speaker of the Majlis: There is no basis in fact concerning this issue. Except for this group with McFarlane, who came to Iran clandestinely, no one has come to Iran. Of course, from the time the Americans realized that they could not destroy the Islamic revolution of Iran, they have been thinking of a way to find a foothold in Iran, with messages and various kinds of ruses. But their coming was only talked about.

Tim Holdin: At the present, the problem of the Soviet Union is at issue. Considering that country's recent measures in the Persian Gulf, it seems that the Soviet Union is arming Iraq more than all the other countries, even more than the British and the Americans. Why is it that in the slogans and speeches, the West is more attacked than is the Soviet Union?

Hashemi-Rafsanjani: Because of the history of the crimes the Americans have committed in Iran. Because our nation considers the United States responsible for the crimes of the shah. Whatever occurred in Iran was supported by the United States and some of the other Western governments. In this war, too, the hand of the United States is visible through countries such as Jordan, Egypt, and Kuwait, which support the war without hesitation, and the money for the Soviet arms is paid by these Arab countries, which are the agents of the United States. Our nation sees all of this. In addition, after the revolution, too, the Americans had transformed their embassy in Iran into a spy nest and conspired against the revolution. And at the present, our enemies and the counterrevolutionaries are supported mainly in the United States and the Western countries. All of this has resulted in our nation being extremely pessimistic, and rightly so, with regard to their evil intentions.

British reporter: What are your demands from the United States, on the basis of which any kind of expansion of relations between the Islamic Republic and the United States could become possible?

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani: As I said, the conspiratorial acts against us by the Americans, both before and after the revolution, are the main factor behind the anger of our nation. I do not see the Americans as being able to easily modify the opinion of our nation towards them in the near future. If there is a way, it is through giving up their conspiratorial behavior. In other words, our people must understand that in practice, the United States has given up its conspiratorial behavior and does not act with hostility towards our nation.

Holdin: But your anger towards the United States has not caused you to refuse to receive their weapons.

Speaker of the Majlis: We have received a small part of the large amount that the United States owes us. And that was upon the initiative of the Americans themselves, who begged us and took the first step.

Holdin: Last Bahman [21 January-19 February 1987], it was proven in practice that the air force of Iraq did not have the power and competence in the region. Was this the result of the antiair weapons that you received?

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani: Their effect in terms of our defense was minimal. Most of our resources were procured in other ways. The total of what we know was about 2,000 TOW missiles. We now manufacture similar ones ourselves and they have no effect. We ourselves mainly manufacture the parts for the HAWK system as well.

British reporter: I have followed the war from the beginning and believe that Iranians have made good progress. The people have also given their support. Do you not think that the more the war advances, the greater the threat to the revolution will be, because the people have been very patient so far and they have tolerated much discomfort?

Speaker of the Majlis: It has not happened so far. The more we have advanced, the more prepared and the more loyal to the revolution the people have become. There is no reason why it should be otherwise in the future, because from now on, the further we go, the more the people will see the signs of victory and the more their faith in continuing defense will increase.

Holdin: Western public opinion considers Iran as one of the centers of global terrorism. In your opinion, what influence will such a supposition have on the course of the war?

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani: What influence can their thinking about us have? We try to stand on our own feet and continue the war. We do not consider their governments to be our friends; we consider them our enemies. They are now working against us and we do not need them. Therefore, the war and revolution will continue their own course. This is their own problem.

British reporter: In your Constitution, noninterference in the internal affairs of their countries has been emphasized, but at the same time, it supports liberation movements inside those countries. In your opinion, how are these two views not at odds with one another?

Speaker of the Majlis: The problem exists, that is, support for liberation movements and noninterference in the internal affairs of countries. There is a very delicate line. We try not to interfere. We are now supporting the Palestinians. What kind of interference have we been part of in Israel? We also support the Muslims in Afghanistan. What interference have we been part of there? We do not do anything ourselves. We try not to carry out anything physically inside countries ourselves. We support them at a level that is not considered interference.

This problem also exists for all countries. After all, every country supports some sort of course. This support does not necessarily mean interference.

Holdin: Since the Hezbollah in Lebanon consider the imam as their leader, and sometimes in your speeches you give them the right to take hostages in Lebanon because of their problems, are you accused for your direct support of them?

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani: Firstly, the Hezbollah does not believe that it engages in terrorist acts. They do not admit to hostage taking. There are groups other than the Hezbollah that have taken hostages. Secondly, as we have said, the situation in Lebanon is different from that in other places. In Lebanon, the situation has reached a point that countries such as the United States, England, France and Italy have sent in forces. Now, Syria has forces there, too. The situation in Lebanon is different from that in other

countries. At the present time, your own governments support movements that engage in terrorism and exploding bombs in our country.

Does your government admit that it supports terrorism? The situation in this regard is the same for everyone. We try to ask those who work with us not to engage in terrorist acts.

British reporter: The West is frightened by the slogans of your revolution concerning the expansion of the Islamic ideology in the region and the slogan of supporting the oppressed against the oppressors. Has this idea changed?

Speaker of the Majlis: We have not said anything incorrect that should be changed. We speak out the slogans of our revolution.

The rule of Islam in Islamic countries, which is the motivation for all Muslims, is to support the oppressed, the wronged and those whose rights have been taken away by others, whether by domestic capitalists and internal governments or foreign domineering colonialists, these are not issues that we can change. The fact that they are afraid is the result of their own actions, because they are unjust. They are afraid that the oppressed will learn from our nation and revolt. And because they do not want to carry out their Islamic duties, they are afraid that the Muslims will demand of them the implementation of Islamic laws. When they say that we interfere or forceably export revolution, this will not be the case. Certainly, we will not forceably impose our ideas on any nation or any country. The people are free. They accept them if they wish and refuse them if they do not. It is the same inside our country, well. There are people here who have not yet accepted our ideas.

Holdin: How do you see the course of the war, and also the creation of relations between the United States and Iran, as well as the main goals of the revolution?

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani: In the war, we have advanced somewhat and have gained successes. In relation to the United States, the issue is clear. The United States, even when it claims that it wants to establish relations, will not stop its conspiratorial acts and cheating. In the recent case, too, it cheated, selling at high prices and involving Israel in the affair. It knew that we hate Israel and would not agree to buy from Israel or accept it as a U.S. partner.

And the most important change was that it was proven to us that the Americans have a greater need to have relations with the Islamic revolution of Iran in the region and the revolution continues its course.

Tim Holdin: Do you not think that negotiations with U.S. officials was a risk?

Answer: We did not deal with them. They dealt with arms purchasing agents.

British reporter: The last time that I prepared a film in Iran, I was accused in London of having received \$500,000 from the Iranian regime to make the film. Bakhtiar's newspaper presented me as the imam's spy. I ask you, if it is possible, to give me a few seconds of the tape on which McFarlane and his companions spoke to their president.

Answer: The accusation that they made about you makes you realize what liars our enemies are. You know better that Iran does not pay money to anyone. In regards to the tapes, we are organizing them to be broadcast all at once. We do not want to publish some of it now.

British reporter: The broadcast of a few seconds of this tape will result in a larger audience in the world paying attention to this film.

Speaker of the Majlis: This requires consultation. I cannot make a decision about it alone.

Tim Holdin: Considering severance of relations between the United States and Iran, do you think you will continue the war for another eight years without receiving any weapons?

Hashemi-Rafsanjani: Before this happened, at the time when Iraq was powerful, we continued the war for seven years. Obviously, we are able to do so. This was nothing. In fact, it was the United States that was defeated. We can procure several times as much on the black market, if we need it.

British reporter: Where do you get the money and what do you use to buy them?

Speaker of the Majlis: Where did we get it during these past years?

British reporter: Many economic observers believe that God is certainly on the side of the Iranians, because they cannot understand how this money is provided.

Speaker of the Majlis: We do not fight very expensively. Our war budget every year is discussed openly in the Majlis. The whole world knows that our war budget is less than \$3 billion in foreign currency.

Tim Holdin: Concerning the cake presented by McFarlane, did you or the Guards eat the cake?

Speaker of the Majlis: We were joking. That cake was destroyed in the airport.

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CSO: 4640/134

MENGAL HINTS U.S. INTEREST IN BALUCHISTAN COAST

Islamabad HURMAT in Urdu 24 Apr 3-May 87 pp 17-18

[Interview with Sardar Ataulah Mengal, Former Chief Minister of Baluchistan, by Radio Kabul; date and place not specified]

[Text] Sardar Ataulah Mengal, former chief minister of Baluchistan, a prominent tribal leader, and the founder of Baluch-Pakhtoon Front, is in Kabul these days. He had meetings with Nawab Khair Bax Murray, another prominent Baluchi leader and Dr Najibullah, president of Afghanistan. Political observers consider Mengal's sudden arrival in Kabul from London and the following long meeting with the Afghan president very significant. Radio Kabul broadcasted a long interview with Sardar Mengal in its Baluchi program. We monitored this interview and are presenting it to our readers.

[Question] Is not the present situation in Pakistan encouraging?

[Answer] The present situation in Pakistan is not at all optimistic. Pakistanis have too many problems. They do not have democratic right. The greatest problem is the crisis the minority groups are facing. Pakistan will be in serious trouble until it solves problems of various minorities. At present Punjab has become almighty in Pakistan and the smaller provinces have lost their social, economic, and political rights. Punjab is "ruling" the other provinces. This has caused a feeling of deprivation among the smaller provinces, because they do not have rights even to their own resources. I believe that until the people in the three smaller provinces -- Sind, Baluchistan, and Sarhad -- do not get their political and economic rights, this problem will remain. This crisis will keep getting worse. The government should give equal rights to all groups in these provinces if it wants to end this crisis.

[Question] What is your opinion about the Sind-Baluch-Pakhtoon Front?

[Answer] This party was established to fight the high-handed policies practiced by Punjab over minorities' rights. This party is working according to a plan. The smaller provinces, Sarhad, Sind, and Baluchistan, are experiencing a feeling of inferiority due to Punjab's overbearing role. They have even begun to talk about a confederation instead of the federation. They had been encouraging the front's program. The sole purpose of our efforts is

to help minorities in our country get their rights.

[Question] How are the Baluchs and Pakhtoons relating to each other in the front?

[Answer] Relationship between Baluchs, Sindhis, and Pakhtoons was traditional in nature before the front was established. Now it is ideological. These groups, especially Baluch and Pakhtoon, are closer to each other than before. I believe that the people fail in political struggles because they lack unity. Minorities will never be able to get their rights until they unite. Minorities in the smaller provinces are still complaining that their rights are being spurned by the larger province. We need a united political effort to get our rights. We established Sindhi-Baluch-Pakhtoon Front for this purpose.

[Question] Why do you think the United States is interested in Pakistan?

[Answer] The United States does not think that Pakistan in itself is very important. It believes that Baluchistan is more important than Pakistan. The present U.S. aid to Pakistan is being given mainly due to its interest in Baluchistan's 350 mile long coast joining the Gulf of Hormuz. This coast is important for international security. The United States wants to keep this area under its surveillance due to the volatile political situation here. The only purpose of the aid given to Pakistan is to keep this area under the U.S. control.

[Question] What do you think about the economic progress made in Baluchistan?

[Answer] Baluchistan has made no progress. The propaganda about the progress made by Baluchistan is false. Even today, Baluchis living in most areas lack basic amenities. There are no roads in Makran for miles. The roads and airports constructed with U.S. aid has not benefited the masses there. These are being built for military reasons.

[Question] Several students have been sent to the United States for study under the U.S. aid plan. Please comment on this development.

[Answer] In order to keep people in Makran quiet 52 students were selected from Makran area for study in the United States. I think this was done to make the student group happy. The United States is doing all this just to protect its own interests. The United States does not care what happens to Makran.

[Question] What is your opinion about the Hub Industrial Estate?

[Answer] Why did they pick Hub for establishing an industrial estate? There are many other places in Baluchistan for establishing industrial estates. They chose this place just to check the industrial growth in Baluchistan. This area was closer to other provinces. When they established the industrial estate there and built several factories, they made sure that Baluchis do not get employment there. They imported laborers from Karachi and had them settle here. At present the number of Baluchis working in these factories is almost negligible.

PAKISTAN'S INTERNAL, EXTERNAL SECURITY SEEN IN PERIL

Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 12 Apr 87 p 2

[Column 'Sawere sawere' ['Morning Rap'] by Nazir Naji: "Extremity of Submissiveness"]

[Text] After the bomb blast in Ihsan Ilahi Zaheer's meeting, I had written in this column on 24 March that "this is an example of a blind and ruthless attack by arms dealers. If I am right, there will be more incidents like this in Punjab." A few days later, I ran into Punjab's inspector general of police, Hafiz Sabaluddin Jami, in a flight from Karachi to Lahore. I told him, "Incidents like this will happen again and the police will be helpless. Even if the police gets exemplary training, the police force can at best stop crime in a peaceful community. The commando-type activities that took place in Sind and Punjab have the support of province-wide groups and cannot be stopped by the police. The Afghan crisis has forced us into a war-like situation here. These blasts are directly or indirectly related to this crisis and the police is not trained to control such military-type acts of aggression."

In the modern world a war is not carried out by an open attack; there are many new methods employed now. Guerrillas also have adopted new tactics. In the Third World, especially in countries where governments are weak, guerrillas are not deployed. Instead, business organizations are used to attain important goals. Intelligence agencies of big nations keep close contacts with international Mafia organizations, professional terrorists, local criminals, and business groups. Only minor incidents are happening in Pakistan so far. In Chile, an international advertising agency had the "contract" to overthrow President Allende.

In capitalist societies the government is not always the most powerful agency. There are usually several power groups. For example, the multinational companies, oil barons of California, the "Wall Street Mafia," arms dealers, and the CIA are very important power wielding groups in the United States. Two U.S. presidents, Kennedy and Nixon, have fallen prey to these power brokers during the last 2 decades. These very groups are pressuring President Reagan these days. The "Iran Gate" incident has proved that these powers do not work according to the wishes of the U.S. Government. Other groups also benefit from the activities of these organizations, especially when the government policy is contrary to their interests. Keeping all this in mind, I had expressed the fear that the arms procured by Afghan Mujahiddin are sold in black market

under the supervision of the CIA and the money earned is spent according to the wishes of this agency. It should be remembered that some of the money received from Iran was spent on Afghan Mujahids. The CIA obviously needed "black money" for this purpose! The United States helps the Afghan Mujahids openly. The public opinion in the United States and the feelings in the U.S. Congress clearly indicate that "black money" was not necessary. Obviously, this black money was needed for some other purpose.

Let us discuss some interest groups now. The U.S. arms manufacturers can benefit only if there are world-wide conflicts and problems. They need a 'theater' to test the U.S. arms against the Soviet arms. Until recently this 'theater' was the Middle East. They decided to declare the Middle East a peaceful area. They needed an alternate 'field.' International oil companies want hostility between the oil producing nations in the Middle East and the Soviet Union. This will keep the oil cheap and the guns expensive. The two big oil producers, the Arab countries and the Soviet Union, will not be able to work together to raise oil prices. This and many other vested interests are bent upon keeping the aggressive situation in Afghanistan going. It is possible that the governments of Pakistan and the United States are worried by the activities of these interest groups.

The fear, violence, and destruction in Punjab will cause a feeling insecurity, and this feeling will make people ask for protection. Pakistan's present structure and resources cannot provide this protection. The Kabul government is responsible for these bomb blasts. Sooner or later we will be forced to seek direct assistance from the United States. The Afghan crisis will become very serious once the U.S. personnel are involved. The U.S. and Pakistani governments will be pulled into a situation leading to a long war.

The project to deprive Pakistani society of character and ideological base that was started by Yahaya Khan appears to have been complete now. Selfishness has overshadowed the importance of pride in religion, moral, and cultural values. Pakistanis are losing their zeal and desire to live in this country. They are slowly transforming into a group of helpless people who do not think that they can change their fate. A society going through such a phase easily falls prey to foreign intrusion. We are being forced to create this kind of situation. The continuous tradition of martial law regimes has weakened us like an AIDS victim whose immune system has been destroyed. Now, just the mention of martial law is enough to make us docile. We are begging for prosperity by submitting to slavery. The beggars, however, get orders instead of prosperity. They cannot decide whether to fight or have peace. Whether it is the question of peace in Kashmir or war in Afghanistan, the Pakistani nation is not consulted. There is no grass on either the Siachen Glacier or the dry mountains of Afghanistan. This all is still very important for us. I see "blood in the rivers flowing from there."

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GOVERNMENT SEEN IGNORING COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS; URGED TO ACT

Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 21 Apr 87 p 3

[Editorial: "Meaningless Talk"]

[Text] While addressing the joint parliamentary session, the president did not only praise the activities of elected officials, but also highlighted the role of the armed forces. It is nice to hear from the chief of army staff that the civilian government has performed better than the military regime and that the military has no reason to be involved in politics. The military, according to him, is faithful to the present government. He further said that, "nobody in this country -- the government, the people, or the armed forces -- wants a martial law government. The armed forces are faithful to the government, obey it, and expect it to be fair." The president and the chief of army staff reminded us that the armed forces had given up power on its own and not under any pressure. He wanted the country to prosper under a democratic government.

Such a tribute by the commander-in-chief to a government is unique in the history of Pakistan. That is what happens in a democratic country. India, our neighbor and the country which got its freedom at the same time as we did even though it did take some liberties with the democratic process, had never let the armed forces take power. Even a part of Pakistan which became Bangladesh could not avoid this curse of martial law. Here in Pakistan, we have just gotten rid of the third martial law regime, and some people still insist that we are still under martial law rule. It is believed in some circles that martial law is going to return any minute. Therefore, an announcement by the chief of staff denying any role of the armed forces in politics is a welcome sign. However, we can say that the armed forces have always denied being interested in taking over the government. Each martial law was enacted for "the welfare of our people." The president of East Pakistan, Mohammad Irshad, had also told his country a few days before enacting the martial law that the armed forces were not interested in taking over the country! However, in the present situation we have no alternative but to believe our president. He knows well that, God forbid, if there is another martial law that would be the last one in this country. He has voluntarily lifted the martial law, held general elections, and transferred power to a civilian government. Now, he should take some concrete steps to ensure supremacy of this government over the armed forces so that another adventurer is unable to put an end to all this again. We would like to remind him of a statement attributed to him at

this point. He had once said that the person sitting in the chair of the chief of army staff is the one that has all the power in Pakistan. We are sure that President Ziaul Haq wants the democracy to flourish in this country because he would not like to see his own experiment to fail. We are also sure that our armed forces are faithful to our government, however, President Ziaul Haq knows well what happened here in the past. One former president, Sikander Mirza, implemented the first martial law rule in the country by taking advantage of the armed forces loyalty. He suspended the constitution, broke up the parliament, closed all democratic institutions, and banned all political parties. However, he fell prey to his own creation, the martial law regime. He also laid the foundation of a "bad habit" in this country. One of his appointed generals took advantage of his support and ruled the country under martial law for almost 10 years. When he fell from power, he tore up the constitution he himself had drafted. The president stated that no one in this country likes a martial law regime. That is very true, however, who cared for what people liked in the past? The rulers did whatever they wanted. We need concrete assurances for the future this time.

The president is very laudatory about the achievements of this parliament during the last 2 years. What did this Parliament do during this period except drafting the 8th and the 10th amendment? What long-term problems of serious nature has it solved? It even has tabled the 9th amendment and has confused the issue of the Shariat Bill so badly that we can make neither head nor tail of it. As for the foreign policy, India has been accusing us of everything since this government took over and all this government has done is to apologize and defend itself. The Kashmir problem has been put on the ice after the Simla Pact. No progress has been made on it except an occasional mention. We do not foresee any progress on this issue in the near future. Inflation, graft, nepotism, murder, robbery, and violence occur daily and the government has not done anything to solve these problems. How can we praise this government? The largest municipal body in the country which had the majority support was suspended by the stroke of a pen of a state government, and the federal government did not even ask the state government why this undemocratic action was taken! They said that the state government has the trust of Congress, therefore, the question of any inquiry did not arise. The people in our country are not very excited about this kind of "revolution."

The president shed light on the state of affairs in the nation. His tone indicated that he was not disappointed in any area. This was, however, a ceremonial speech. It did not include any new information, just what most leaders say and what people are used to hear on such occasions. The people expected the president to present a concrete plan for progress, solutions to the problems people are facing, and a plan to establish peace in the country. His speech just did not include any of these. People are concerned that the largest city in the nation is in turmoil for a long time. There is no peace there and the administration has been suspended. Armed forces have to be called in repeatedly to suppress violence. The incidents happening in that city are of nature that are influencing the whole nation. This is not a problem of a subdivision, or a city or a region; the unity of the whole nation is at stake here. It is a good idea to discuss the foreign policy and inform the public about its important points, but the internal policy should also be discussed sometime. People had high hopes that this would have been brought up

in this speech in the Parliament and the nation's elected people would find a viable solution to this problem. It appears that our leader and his associates are not aware of the seriousness of the situation. Is not the present situation in Karachi and Hyderabad analogous to the situation there in 1977? The army had to implement the martial law at that time. For the sake of a civilian democratic government to remain here, for the welfare of the people, and for their own sake, the government should pay immediate attention to the situation and take strict action against the troublemakers. The government should let the nation know of its existence and improve the country's internal affair before another adventurer decides to interfere.

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MUHAJIRS' ROLE IN PAKISTAN LAUDED

Karachi JANG in Urdu 23 Apr 87 p 3

[Article by Agha Masood Hussain: "Pir Pagara, Beirut, and Muhajirs"]

[Text] Recently a dinner honoring Pir Pagara was given at the residence of the prominent Muslim League leader, Haroon Ahmad. This dinner was attended by several political leaders representing various parties. The weather that night was not very good. Pir Pagara advised Muhajirs in his speech that they should get under the shade of the tree of Muslim League since it would give them shelter and also open new doors for their prosperity. They should not, he added, forget what happened in Beirut. Pir Pagara spoiled the whole mood of the party by bringing in Beirut's history out of context. He has referred to Beirut in the past too.

I am a humble student of history and have high respect for this discipline. I began to think how Pakistanis have suffered so many calamities in the short history of this country. Rivers of blood have flowed, but still we have not learned any lesson! Calling any country Beirut is easy, but establishing a country and then making it self-supporting is like "catching a lion." The Muhajirs have worked hard. They have improved barren land dramatically in 40 years. These Muhajirs who are being persecuted from all sides are the same people who were advised by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in his speech from Jama Masjid not to leave their homes and graves of their ancestors to settle in the wilds. The lovers of Pakistan and Islam, however, did not listen to him. They joined one or other caravan and moved to Pakistan. Some lost everything and those who had managed to salvage anything gave it to this newborn country. They wanted to make this country great. They wanted the Muslims to feel proud of it and other countries in the world respect it. They did not want to make this country another Beirut. Those oppressed people who came in caravans are still very much persecuted. Some of them are suffering in jails of Dhaka. Some are being murdered by the "drug Mafia" in Ali Garh Colony, Orangi, and Qasba. These are the rewards they received for loving and working for Pakistan. The only name they can be called by is -- oppressed. I believe that the best thing in this world is being oppressed because these are the people that are revered by history and God. From Abuzar Ghafari to Hussain, all saints with new ideas, did shake up empires with their sacrifices. Some of those empires were destroyed so badly that it is hard to believe that those ever existed. The oppressed are still ruling our hearts, however. Pir Pagara should know that

Muhajirs are oppressed, but they will never make this country a Beirut. Instead, they will make another Karbla [city of martyrs] so that they can proudly bow to God. The truth is that all political parties have become worried when Muhajirs united. Every one is saying various things in their worry. The Muhajir have not united against any group or party. Muhajirs just are not able to hate Sindhis, Baluchis, Punjabis, or Pathans living with them in Pakistan. They came here for Pakistan and Pakistan only and will live and die for Pakistan. When Pir Sahib advises Muhajirs to join the ruling Muslim League party, I would like to ask him one question with due respects. Where is Muslim League and which Muslim League is he talking about? A party that came to power overnight by a royal mandate cannot represent or lead the people. Why should the Muhajirs join a party which is not even properly established and which does not have definite future? If Pir Pagara has some concrete advice to the Muhajirs, we can discuss that with him. Pakistanis know how Ayub Khan's Convention League disappeared like the fog after he left the government. Bhutto's PPP would have met the same fate except that he kept it alive by giving his own life. Political parties are born after many sacrifices and grow with good leaders. A good crop of young and dynamic leaders has emerged in Pakistan. These young people are playing an important role as opposition leaders. I think that Pir Pagara is well aware who is in the hearts of Pakistanis. At present some opportunists are in power. They got support from helpless people. Were the elections held on party basis, they would never had won their seats.

Therefore, I would like to tell Pir Pagara to first throw the rotten eggs out of his Muslim League Party. Then, he should replace them with old Muslim Leaguers with ability and character. That is how the Muslim League can become the party of Pakistani people. Young people should be invited to join the party after that. I want to assure Pir Pagara that Muhajirs will never make this province a Beirut. Instead, they will make this province a place of peace and growth so that everyone can live here with pride. As I said earlier only the oppressed can be respected. To be with God, you have to be a martyr or have uttered the painful cry of an oppressed person. These Muhajirs meet both of these criteria. This country always had the problem of having a good leader. Quaid-e Azam had said just before his death that "there are some bad coins in my hand." Thus, after Liaqat Ali Khan died, all these bad coins came out in the market. They have transformed the political scene in our country. In the city of love, not everyone with tattered clothes is called a lover! As the poet said, "Look at the fickleness of politics; those who never started the trip have arrived at the destination!"

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